

New group claims Lebanon killing

BEIRUT (AP) — A previously unknown group claimed responsibility Monday for last week's assassination in Beirut of a Sunni Muslim fundamentalist leader. It was the second claim for last Thursday's killing of Sheikh Nizar Al-Halabi, gunned down by masked assassins outside his home. His son, driver and a bodyguard were wounded. Two Lebanese have been detained in connection with the killing, which has cast doubt on efforts to restore stability following the end in 1990 of Lebanon's 15-year civil war. Al-Halabi, 43, headed the Islamic Charitable Projects Association, an organisation bankrolling the fundamentalist Al-Bashir group, whose members are estimated to number about 5,000. His deputy, Sheikh Mohammad Oraqira, was chosen as successor on the same day. A caller, speaking in Lebanese-accented Arabic, telephoned the Beirut office of a Western news agency Monday to say his "Umma Party" group was responsible for Al-Halabi's killing. "We carried out the execution... because of the association's Jewish origin and conduct," said the caller.

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Clock ticks down to deadline for Serbs

SARAJEVO (R) — North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) warplanes circled over Bosnia as the hours counted down to the Monday night deadline for Serb forces to ease their siege of Sarajevo or face renewed bombardment.

Bosnian Serb big guns around the capital were silent as dusk fell ahead of the 11 p.m. (2100 GMT) time. The United Nations and NATO had set for Serb commander General Ratko Mladic to comply with their demands.

"If he doesn't play ball he's going to get hit very, very hard, that is the bottom line," said U.N. spokesman Alexander Ivanov, reflecting the new tough-talking mood since NATO's three days of air raids last week.

But there was no sign of the guns being pulled back, the U.N. said, or any word from the Bosnian Serbs they would meet the demands. To remind the Bosnian Serbs of the threat two NATO jets roared over the "capital" Pale through low cloud.

Exactly a week after a devastating mortar attack on a Sarajevo market killed 38 people and injured 85, provoking NATO to act after long hesitation, the people of Sarajevo relished the new sense of protection.

"I'm not afraid at all," said cigarette-seller Zijada Alichajic who was back at her stand after the mortar hit. "It's the Serb cowards who are shaking in their boots now... the world seems serious about stopping the war this time."

The United Nations has not waited for the deadline to pass to test Serb compliance. Convoys of trucks crossed in

and out of the city on a road opened by the U.N. in defiance of the Serbs.

U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke played down the concerns of the Bosnian government that a pause since Friday morning in NATO attacks had gone on too long.

"It took us many years to get to this point and I don't think a few hours either way is going to make a difference," he said.

In Brussels, NATO officials tried to take the heat out of expectations that air strikes might resume exactly at 11 p.m. said one senior NATO source. "The situation will then be fully assessed, it is not a deadline for the start of bombing."

With the threat of further bombardment hovering, the Serbs protested that their counter proposals to the U.N. had been misinterpreted. But a text of their position was stitched with conditions the U.N. had already said it would not countenance.

Mr. Holbrooke and European Union mediators kept up a hectic pace of diplomatic contacts ahead of Friday's proposed face-to-face meeting of Bosnian, Croatian and Yugoslav foreign ministers in Geneva.

Bosnia said again that the delay in air raids put its participation in Geneva in doubt.

Serb military sources claimed they were holding two French aviators whose Mirage fighter-bomber was shot down during raids last Thursday. The news raised fears the Bosnian Serbs could use them as hostages to ward off fresh air strikes.

U.N. officials in Sarajevo said the fact that Bosnian



King, Queen on private visit to U.K.

AMMAN (Petra) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor left Amman on Monday for London on a several-day private visit to the United Kingdom.

They were seen off at the airport by their Royal Highnesses Prince Mohammad (photo above), Princess Taghrid, Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath and other members of the royal family.

Also present to bid farewell to the King and Queen were Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shakir, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem, the speakers of parliament, cabinet members and senior officials as well as the British ambassador to Jordan.

Crown Prince Hassan was sworn in to serve as Regent during the King's absence.

Accompanying the King and Queen on their visit are several princes and princesses and Jordan's ambassador to the United Kingdom.

Israeli, PLO delegates start looking at maps

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) negotiating teams on Monday began studying maps to work out intricate security arrangements for expanding Palestinian rule in the West Bank, a PLO official said.

"Both sides will today open the maps and discuss them for the first time," chief PLO negotiator Ahmad Qouriea told Reuters. "We are in the final stages now. We did not open them before because we had to agree on the principle first."

The talks, in Israel's Red Sea resort of Eilat, resumed on Sunday night. The sides are more than a year behind schedule on expanding 16-month-old self-rule beyond Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho.

"We are talking about borders and security arrangements which require detailed maps," Mr. Qouriea said in a reference to an Israeli troop redeployment away from West Bank Palestinian cities as envisaged in their 1993 breakthrough peace deal.

According to that agreement, Israel is to redeploy away from populated Palestinian areas, which include major cities and villages, but not from Jewish settlements and military sites.

Officials say the West Bank could end up looking like a complex mosaic as the two sides define boundaries around each town and village, settlement and main road where three different kinds of security arrangements are to apply.

Elections to a Palestinian council to run most aspects of life in the West Bank and Gaza Strip would take place after redeployment.

The sides are still at odds over such key issues as redeployment from Hebron where some 400 Jewish settlers live among 100,000 Palestinians.

Israel wants to delay redeployment from Hebron while Palestinians insist on a two-stage pullout from the city with temporary security arrangements in the Old City where Jews live.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin made a surprise visit on Monday to Hebron surrounded by police and army security that witnesses described as "enormous."

Security sources said Mr. Rabin wanted to examine security options.

The two sides expect PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to resolve some of the key issues at a meeting in Egypt's Red Sea resort of Taba this week.

Israel and the PLO signed an agreement last week to transfer eight civilian spheres to Palestinians in the West Bank. They are still struggling to agree on another 25 spheres.

"We will discuss the territorial spheres and will try to finalise the transfer of eight economic spheres, and I believe we have very hard work ahead of us," Mr. Qouriea said.

During his Hebron tour Monday, Mr. Rabin was accompanied by Mr. Peres and the West Bank's army commander, Major Gen. Ilan Biran.

Mr. Rabin's spokeswoman, Aliza Goren, said the group visited military installations. Israel Radio said Mr. Rabin also visited the Ibrahim Mosque where a Jewish settler shot and killed at least 30 Muslim worshippers in February 1994.

The site, sacred to Muslims and Jews, is a site of frequent friction between Israelis and Palestinians.

On Sunday, a leading member of Mr. Rabin's cabinet said Jewish settlers should be evacuated from Hebron, suggesting that otherwise it would be impossible to keep Israel's pledge to withdraw its soldiers from Palestinian towns in the West Bank.

Meanwhile, hundreds of Palestinian students demonstrated Monday for a third straight day against the presence of Jewish settlers outside their schools in East Jerusalem.

A dozen armed Israelis have camped day and night outside the unofficial Palestinian headquarters, which stands in the same street as three schools and the settlers' school.

The students, supported by parents and teachers, shouted slogans such as "Rabin's peace is false" and "Throw out the settlers."

"Let us learn in peace," read one placard in Arabic, Hebrew and English.

Israeli security forces did not intervene.

Jordan to push bid to be base for MENAFIO

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian officials on Monday appeared to take in their stride reports that a proposed Middle East development bank will be based in Cairo but said the Kingdom would press its quest to host a related institution that would be to identifying projects.

Some of the officials and other sources said the United States and Egypt appeared to have made a secret deal under which the proposed bank will be headquartered in Cairo.

However, it also appeared that Jordan was none too anxious to host the bank either, given that the proposed entity would be granting loans at commercial interest rates for development projects and concessionary credits, if any, would be too selective and limited.

But Jordan is determined to realise its quest to have a related institution, the Middle East and North Africa Financial Intermediary Organisation (MENAFIO), said an official.

"We don't really care where the proposed bank is located, but we would definitely want to host MENAFIO, or whatever you want to call it," said the official, who did not want to be identified.

The official and several other sources, confirming that the U.S. and Egypt had reached an as-yet unofficial accord to have the proposed bank based in Cairo, asserted that Jordan should be in a better position to have a strong say in project identification if MENAFIO is based in the Kingdom.

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MENAFIO is a compromise reached during a recent meeting in Moscow of an international task force on exploring the pros and cons of the proposed Mideast development bank after a consensus could not be reached.

It is expected to serve as an interim body for two years in identifying projects that are of optimum benefit to the regional parties as well as projects that are of national nature for the countries involved.

Financing for the identified projects could come from various sources under advice by the organisation.

However, there is no agreement yet whether MENAFIO should be automatically become the proposed development bank at the end of the two years or continue its functions.

Several European and Gulf countries argue that

(Continued on page 7)

Assad's comments 'disappoint' Peres

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres voiced disappointment on Monday at what he said was Syrian President Hafez Al Assad's "pessimistic tone" on peace moves and his refusal to enter into high-level talks.

Mr. Peres told reporters he has been confused by Mr. Assad's statement at a Cairo news conference on Sunday that higher-level talks demanded by Israel would block the road to peace.

"There was a disappointment yesterday in the appearance of Assad both because of his pessimistic tone and also because of one answer which was a bit strange," Mr. Peres said.

"When they asked him, 'why don't you raise the level of the negotiations to a higher level,' he said this is the disease and not the cure. And I didn't understand why it is a disease."

Mr. Peres — in an apparent reference to peace deals with Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinians — said that past agreements were achieved through negotiations not only

on the military level but also at the highest political levels.

"I don't see any reason why something so normal and accepted in the world will not happen between Syria and us," Mr. Peres said.

Four years of low-level talks are stuck. Damascus demands Israel return all of the Golan Heights seized in 1967. Israel says it is willing to pull back but won't say how far until Syria commits itself to full normal ties.

A parliamentary official said Mr. Peres told a closed-door committee meeting earlier that Israel's attempt to raise the level of negotiations with Syria had been turned down.

The official told reporters Mr. Peres said negotiations with Syria were stalemated in part because Damascus had failed to keep its agreement to hold talks between senior military officers.

Mr. Peres said another problem was that Syria was insisting the sides had agreed to remove Israeli warning stations for the Golan from the agenda.

Women conference begins with emphasis on equality

BEIJING (Agencies) — The biggest U.N. gathering in history began on Monday in China's Great Hall of the People with an extravaganza that included female martial-arts experts and a U.N. declaration that sexual equality was the last great project of the 20th century.

Marring the start of the international gathering were new charges involving heavy-handed security and the question of where the line should be drawn between Chinese authority and U.N. rights.

Britain warned China not to intervene at U.N. sites. Winnie Mandela was shoved and refused entry to welcoming ceremonies, and 150 women made a symbolic breakout from an area to which protests are confined.

But in the Great Hall of the People there was no argument about the tasks that lay ahead before women around the world could claim equality with men.

"Securing the equality of women and men, in law and in fact, is the great political project of the 20th century," United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said in a speech read at the start of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

The conference, held every 10 years, kicked off earlier with a lavish welcoming ceremony of the hall at which a workers' choir sang Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" and Chinese President Jiang Zemin quoted the Chinese saying that "women hold up half the sky."

But Mr. Jiang said discrimination against women was as old as history.

"Prejudices against women, like an invisible chain, fetter the hearts and minds of millions, such outworn mentality should have long been discarded," he said.

Thirty thousand women have flooded into Beijing for the conference and a parallel non-governmental organisations (NGO) forum on women in the suburb of Muairou.

Heads of 185 government delegations were among the audience in the Stalinist-style hall on the edge of Tiananmen Square who raised a roar of approval when female experts fought off male attackers with vicious kicks and punches in a martial-arts display.

"A revolution has begun," conference Secretary-General Gertrude Mongella declared to huge cheers from the delegates. "There's no going back. There's no going back."

"This conference is a milestone in the history of the United Nations' work for women," Dr. Ghali said in a speech delivered in his absence.

"Future generations will

(Continued on page 7)



Dancers and singers perform during the Chinese government's official welcoming ceremony for the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing (AFP photo)

Iraqi exiles want peaceful change at top

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iraqi opponents including three former ministers called on politicians and army chiefs to take advantage of internal upheaval in Baghdad to bring about a peaceful change in government.

The Iraqi Consultative Committee said in a statement that leading Iraqi and Arab figures met in Vienna at the weekend to discuss developments in Baghdad following the Aug. 8 defection to Jordan of two top officials.

The group's statement was signed by former Foreign Minister Adnan Badgadji, former Industry Minister Adib Al Jader and Abdul Ghani Al Dali, ex-agriculture minister.

The former director general of the Iraqi Oil Ministry, Fadel Al Jalabi, also signed. They described as a "great turning point" the defections of General Hussein Kamel, ex-industry minister, his brother and their wives, both daughters of President Saddam Hussein.

"They reveal for the first time the contradictions at the heart of the regime as a prelude to its collapse," the opposition group said.

"For members of the (ruling) Baath Party and the armed forces they represent a chance to take part in a national effort to bring about peaceful change which would save the country from bloodshed and foreign interference."

The statement called for a democratic, multi-party system in Iraq and a government which put an end to political oppression, and respected its international commitments and the rights of Kurds.

It also urged measures to boost Iraq's economy, which has been crippled by five years of U.N. sanctions, and to improve relations with its neighbours "in order to free Iraq from the fall-out of the (1980-1988) war with Iran and the invasion of Kuwait" in 1990.

Gen. Kamel Hassan meanwhile denied that he planned to put his views to a meeting of opposition groups in London.

Gen. Kamel is "not involved" in the meeting on Saturday and "will not present his political programme there," said his cousin Izzeddin Mohammad Hassan, who defected with him.

Meshaan Juburi, representing a powerful tribe that was once a pillar of the Iraqi government, told AFP earlier that Gen. Kamel would send

a recorded message to the meeting "to explain his views on the future of Iraq."

Mr. Juburi said Gen. Kamel wanted to see a democratic and pluralistic society in Iraq with respect for the rights of minorities and ethnic groups.

But Izzeddin Mohammad said: "There will be no taped message" from Gen. Kamel.

The general has "balanced relations with the Iraqi opposition but nobody can speak for him," he said. He "carries out individual contacts himself with the organisations and figures he wants to talk to."

Iraq meanwhile called on Iran to join it in a fight against the "common enemy" — the West.

The economic and political weight of Iran and Iraq qualify them to take the role of

(Continued on page 7)

Israel sends envoy to Cairo to calm war crime dispute

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel dispatched Deputy Foreign Minister Elie Dayan to Cairo on Monday to try to bolster relations amid a storm over the killing of Egyptian prisoners of war (POWs).

"We hope that prisoner of war issue will not damage relations," said Mr. Dayan, who was to meet Foreign Minister Amr Musa later in the day.

"If there was criminal behaviour it was by individuals and not deliberate policy," Mr. Dayan told state radio. "And anyway terrible things were done by both sides."

He pointed out that under Israeli law soldiers guilty of war crimes cannot be prosecuted more than 20 years after the events.

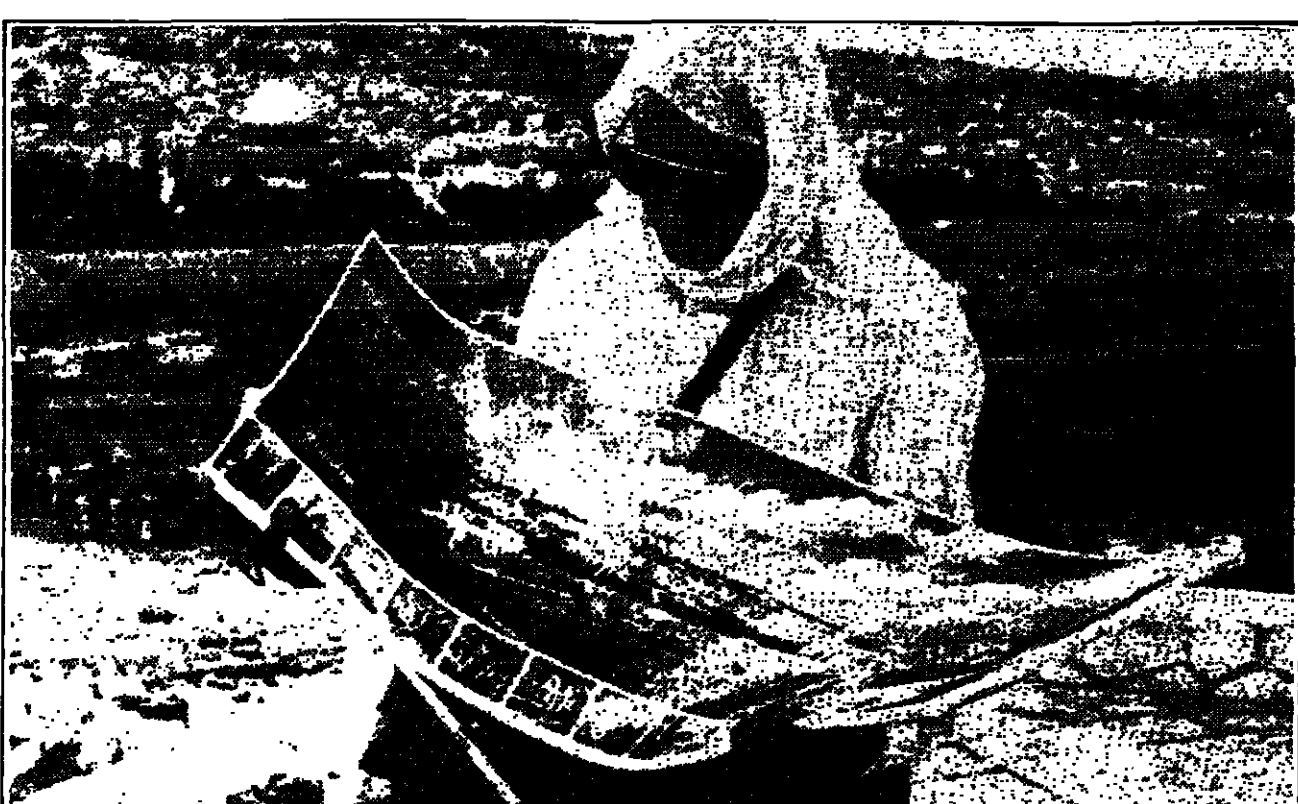
Mr. Dayan renewed an appeal in the Egyptian government "to condemn and to deny" an article in a Cairo newspaper which accused Israel's Ambassador David Sultan of killing around 100 Arab prisoners of war.

The radio said Foreign Minister Shimon Peres had instructed his deputy to "go on the offensive" by pointing out that Egyptian soldiers had also committed atrocities.

Reports first emerged in Israel last month of the massacre of up to 900 Egyptian prisoners who had surrendered their arms in the 1956 Suez campaign and 190 Middle East war.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak called on Israel to prosecute those responsible. Israeli historian Aryeh Yitzhaki, who first revealed the massacres, also urged Mr. Mubarak to investigate the execution of more than 80 Israeli prisoners in Egyptian camps during the 1973 Middle East war.

"The intention is to tell the Egyptians that in the past both sides did things which should not have been done, but these were acts of individuals, not the policy of the governments, and that we must learn from the mistakes of the past, and not let them harm relations in the present," said Dayan's aide Yitzhak Avigad.



HOLY CITY: A blind Palestinian holds up for sale a panorama photograph of Jerusalem with the real view of the Holy City and the Golden Dome of the Rock behind him. On Monday, Israel launched what it considers as the 3,000th anniversary of Jerusalem (see page 12) (AFP photo)

Films against militants prove box office smash

CAIRO (AFP) — Films and TV soaps critical of militants are proving a smash hit in Egypt both at the box office and with television audiences.

"If the overriding theme of cinema in the 1970s was political corruption, which turned to the emergence of new social classes in the 1980s, now its focus is terrorism by Islamists," director Wahid Hamed told AFP. "Belly-dancers, formerly the centre of Egyptian films, have given way to veiled women, while the seductive hero has been replaced by bearded 'emirs' (militant leaders) and Islamist lawyers."

Love scenes have been replaced by action shots such as fires in video stores, hold-ups in jewelers shops or attacks on policemen and writers.

Mr. Hamed wrote the screenplay for "Birds of Darkness" which has swept the country since it opened two weeks ago and is showing on 20 screens.

It stars Egypt's most

popular comedian Adel Imam, who began the wave of anti-Islamist films with his 1993 "Terrorism and Barbeque" and "The Terrorist" a year later.

Such films are "a very strong weapon against terrorism. In a country where half the population is illiterate, films and television are better at informing the public than news bulletins and articles," Mr. Hamed said.

The authorities, who keep a tight grip on the Egyptian media, have welcomed the trend and given it scope to act freely.

Censors allowed "Birds of Darkness" to tell the story of a corrupt minister who wins a parliament election by striking a deal with Islamic activists.

The government also gave Mr. Imam unprecedented access to police and army equipment during his last three films, to such an extent that some critics accused him of "selling out" to government propaganda.

Officials have also opened the door to a flourish of anti-Islamist soap operas and series.

"The Family," written by Mr. Hamed, was the first and has proved the most successful along with the latest, "Escaping the Crisis."

"Egyptian television will continue to produce works which condemn the practices of the extremists which are wrong and contrary to the spirit of tolerance in Islam," Information Minister Safwat Al Sherif said.

"These works have encouraged the population to help security services in their fight against fundamentalists," he said.

The confrontation between police and Muslim militants seeking to overthrow the government has left about 860 people dead since March 1992.

But critics say the image of Islamic activists in television shows is often "superficial and unrealistic," according to Essam Bessila, from the daily Al-Akhbar.

He said one series, "Arms and Illusion," shown since July could

have "the opposite of the intended effect."

The series was inspired by events in the Cairo slum of Imbaba, a fiefdom of the Islamists in the early 1990s, until security forces invaded the neighbourhood late 1992.

Muslim extremists have responded angrily to the new trend. Last year they issued death threats against the director of "The Terrorist," Nader Galal, and last week they condemned Safwat Al Qusheiri, the director of "Escaping the Crisis."

But directors and actors have sworn to "continue the battle."

"My wife insisted at first that I should not play in 'The Terrorist'," Mr. Imam has said. "But when she saw the corpse of a little girl killed in the (failed) assassination attempt against Prime Minister Atef Sedki" in October 1993 "she pushed me into it," he said.

"I am a true Muslim and I will wipe out terrorism by continuing to make people laugh," Mr. Imam said.

Ben Baz urges Muslims to boycott women conference

DUBAI (Agencies) — Saudi Arabia's leading cleric said Muslims should boycott the U.N. Fourth Conference on Women because some items on the agenda were contrary to Islamic principles and promoted obscenity.

Gulf New agencies said Abdul Aziz Ben Baz made his statement on Sunday night, two days after a similar statement by the Higher Council of Ulama, which he heads.

The Council of Experts is the highest religious authority in Saudi Arabia, where strict Islamic laws are applied.

Sheikh Ben Baz was quoted as saying Muslims should boycott the conference, which opened in Beijing on Monday, "because its agenda includes decisions that contradict Islam."

He said the conference is working to "eliminate laws that differentiate between men and women... and calls for obscenity through practising safe sex, extra-marital sex and educating young men and women about sexual issues."

He said the aims of the conference include "stripping humanity of its dignity."

Conservatives, including the Vatican and a number of Islamic states, oppose some of the language of a draft "platform for action" to be debated at the conference, notably those parts dealing with contraception and abortion.

Saudi Arabia did not send delegates to the conference.

Sheikh Ben Baz, in a message broadcast on state radio, appealed to Muslim leaders to take a united stand against this aggression that targets Muslims.

Sheikh Ben Baz added that the document also expresses "atheistic principles, such as one calling for the abrogation of laws making a distinction between men and women on the grounds that religion prevents equality between the sexes."

The Council of the Ulama also charged in a statement issued Sunday the working document authorities "immoral acts" and aims to destroy family life.

NEWS IN BRIEF

More Israelis favour Golan pullout

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A growing number of Israelis support a withdrawal from the strategic Golan Heights in exchange for peace with Syria, although they remain in the minority, a poll showed Monday. Thirty per cent of Israeli Jews interviewed support a complete withdrawal from the Golan in exchange for security guarantees and diplomatic relations with Syria, compared to 23 per cent in December 1994, a poll by the Modiin Ezrahi institute said. The number opposed to a total withdrawal has fallen 10 points, from 64 to 54 per cent, according to the poll, conducted for Bar Ilan University strategic studies centre. The poll of 1,233 Jewish adults was conducted last month.

Iran says pilgrim flights to resume

NICOSIA (R) — Iran said on Monday flights carrying Iranians on pilgrimage to Mecca were resuming after being stopped last month. The official Iranian news agency IRNA said the flights, from Tehran and six other cities, were to start on Monday "after a one-month suspension" to carry 72,000 Iranians wanting to perform Umrah. The flights were "suspended because of the Saudi government not issuing visa for the pilgrims," the agency said. Iran said last month Saudi Arabia also refused to issue permits for the flights. Saudi Arabia and Iran have been at odds about the nature of Haj, which attracts up to two million Muslims from around the world. While Riyadh says that the pilgrimage is a religious affair that should not be politicised, Tehran insists that rallies denouncing what it calls enemies of Islam — the United States and Israel — should be held during Haj.

Iranian 'messenger' sentenced to death

DUBAI (AFP) — An Iranian national proclaiming himself the "messenger of God" has been sentenced to death in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Iran's General Consul Rahim Abedan Zadeh said Monday. Hassan Gholam Hussein Dana, 35-year-old trader, was convicted of apostasy on Aug. 2 by Islamic criminal court of Sharjah. Mr. Dana proclaimed himself "messenger of God" for the first time in September 1994 during a trial by the same court, which had accused him with two other men of embezzlement. Mr. Zadeh said, adding that he repeated his claim later in jail. The court did not say when Mr. Dana would be executed. Mr. Zadeh confirmed that an Iranian religious scholar had visited Mr. Dana to talk him into repenting. A newspaper here, Al Khaleej, said the court had given Mr. Dana ten months to "repent and reenter the rightful path," but he insisted on being "messenger of God even if given ten years."

British energy secretary visits UAE

ABU DHABI (AFP) — British Energy Secretary Tim Eggar arrived in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Monday for talks on energy cooperation and the world oil market. British embassy officials said. The officials gave no further details of the visit, which followed criticism by Gulf states and other oil producers after Britain increased oil output from its North Sea fields. The 12-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) has blamed Britain, Norway and other independent oil producers for weak crude prices, which have remained nearly four dollars below OPEC's target of \$21. British Petroleum is a key shareholder in Abu Dhabi's energy sector along with the French Total and the Japan Oil Development Company. The official news agency WAM said Mr. Eggar was met by former Oil Minister Yousef Omar Ben Yousef, director of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) and secretary general of the Supreme Petroleum Council, which runs the emirate's energy sector. The UAE is the 2.16 billion producer in OPEC, with an output quota of 2.16 million barrels per day.

Kuwait foils 'infiltration' attempts

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait has foiled several infiltration attempts by sea, the interior minister told Monday's Al Watan newspaper. Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah did not specify where the infiltrators came from, but said that there was "no need for concern." Kuwait often reports infiltration attempts by Iraqis and Iraqis, most of them seeking work in the oil rich Gulf country. He also said there "has been no change" on the northern border with Iraq, and that Kuwait continues to monitor "closely" the situation there. Some 1,400 U.S. soldiers began last Wednesday war games in the Kuwaiti desert in a bid to deter Iraq from launching any attack on the emirate. Kuwaiti troops are to join the manoeuvres by mid-September.

Greece protests use of name 'Macedonia' in Beijing

ATHENS (AFP) — The Greek delegation to the World Conference of Women has protested to the United Nations about the use of the name "Macedonia" to refer to delegates from that country, the Greek press reported Monday. In a letter to the United Nations Saturday, the head of the Greek delegation Maria Arsenise reproached the organising committee for having referred to the delegation from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as "Macedonian." She stressed that "there is no state at the United Nations under the name of Macedonia." The matter has been a sensitive issue for Greece since the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. Athens is refusing to recognise the former Yugoslav republic under the name of Macedonia, which it considers as part of the Greek national heritage. In 1993, the United Nations recognised it under the name "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia." But Greece has imposed an economic blockade against its neighbour since February 1994 and Washington is trying to convince the two sides to resume U.S.-brokered negotiations, deadlocked over the parties' refusal to make concessions.

Islamist leader to stand for Algerian presidency

PARIS (R) — A moderate Islamist leader and arch-enemy of hardline Muslim fundamentalists has said he would stand in Algeria's presidential poll on Nov. 16.

Mohammad Nahnah, who is opposed both by militants waging war against the army-backed authorities and by the main secular political parties, told a press conference in Algiers that his Islamic society movement has endorsed his candidacy.

But he is seen as one of the few politicians who can stride over the first poll hurdle of gaining 75,000 supporters' signatures in order to qualify as a candidate.

His party, known by its Arab acronym Hamas is believed to have more than 250,000 supporters.

At least 12 other politicians, including former Prime

Minister Redha Malek, have already announced they will run for the elections.

The poll is an attempt to defuse the political crisis that has been more than 30,000 people killed since violence broke out following the authorities' cancellation in January 1992 of an election which the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

Mr. Nahnah, a former language teacher who founded Hamas in 1990, has repeatedly attacked the Muslim guerrillas as killers who have nothing to do with Islam.

"We could not call what is happening in Algeria a jihad but violence and crime which God and men do not pardon," Mr. Nahnah said in a recent interview.

He said the poll would be

the first stone in rebuilding Algerian democracy.

"Whoever wants to reach power should run in fair political competition and not through guns," he said.

His party has paid for his veiled support of the government. Militants have killed several Hamas activists — including one of its founders, Mohammad Bouslimani, who was kidnapped from his home in December 1993 and found, his throat slit, buried at the foot of a mountain in southwest Algiers.

After Bouslimani's killing, Mr. Nahnah blasted the Muslim guerrillas as "nothing but brigands."

The main opposition parties are staying away from the presidential fray. The now-banned FIS has vowed to wreck the poll.

Since July, the guerrillas have carried out a series of car bombings which have killed more than 40 people, including six on Saturday when a booby-trapped cement mixer exploded at Met-bat, 20 kilometres south of Algiers.

Algiers residents said a car-bomb went off on Sunday by the paramilitary gendarmerie station in Soumaia, some 55 kilometres south of Algiers. Officials were not immediately available to confirm the information.

The car-bomb attack has just occurred. We don't know if there any dead or wounded," said one resident.

The official news agency APS meanwhile said security forces killed 32 guerrillas during a week of operations across Algeria.

Cyprus murder case stalls on fingerprints

LARNACA, Cyprus (R) — An army spade allegedly used by three British soldiers to kill a tour guide on the holiday island of Cyprus bears no fingerprints of the accused killers, a witness told a court on Monday.

Inspector Aristophanes Charalambous, head of the fingerprints section of Cyprus police, testified that a spade listed by prosecutors as the murder weapon had no fingerprints on it at all.

British servicemen Alan Ford, 26, Justin Fowler, 27, and Jeff Pernell, 23, deny beating Danish tour guide Louise Jensen to death with the shovel found in their beach buggy when they were arrested close to military base nearly a year ago.

They have pleaded not guilty to charges of abducting, conspiring to rape and then killing Jensen, 23, who worked in the holiday resort of Ayia Napa, on September 13, 1994.

The woman's battered corpse was found two days after her boyfriend reported she was kidnapped by the three soldiers.

A pair of boots and a belt belonging to the woman found close to her makeshift grave in the village of Paralimni were also clear of fingerprints, the inspector testified.

But he said he found bloodied fingerprints, and prints from a person's palm on the beach buggy.

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel. 7311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
14:00 Captain Planet
14:30 M.A.N.T.I.S.
15:00 Road to Avonlea
16:00 Families
Children's Programme — Raham
17:30 Monty Python
18:30 Varieties — Tarantula
19:00 News in French
19:15 Fast Pas Revers
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 You Bet Your Life
20:00 Piglet Files
20:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
21:15 Doc — Women of the World
21:30 Pacific Station
22:00 News in English
22:30 Russia, The Missing Years
23:30 New York Undercover
23:59 Grace Under Fire
00:30 Varieties

PRAYER TIMES
04:48 Fajr
06:08 (Sunrise) Duha
12:34 Dhuhur
16:02 Maghrib
19:01 'Isha
20:20 'Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 625785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624501

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637441
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 623366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 625543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 717131
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 653526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 664195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
A cold and relatively humid air mass will affect the Kingdom, so skies will be partly cloudy with a chance of showers and wind, westerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp. 15/26
Aqaba 22/33
Deserts 14/20

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Jordan Valley 20/34
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 26, Aqaba 33, Humidity readings: Amman 57 per cent, Aqaba 3

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS
NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Munther Al Quraishi 884286
Dr. Khalil Abu Marjoun 779797
Dr. Khalil Al Toubq 757253
Dr. Mohammad Shaghr 652093
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 649445
Shmiciani pharmacy 627660
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Najih pharmacy 947632
IRBID:
Dr. Ali Shogairi 246140
Alqas pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Walid Halasah 982766
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Rescue Police 192 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 671701
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 824302
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 680321
Hotel Complaints 665800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010241
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 661101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 773111
Radio Jordan 773111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 626301
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int'l. Airport 08-53210

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn

644281/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 664171/4
Palestine, Shmiciani 669137
Smeisani Hospital 845845
University Hospital 66727/9
Al-Musabir Hospital 666127/7
The Islamic, Abdali 664164/6
Amal Hospital 77101/3
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Asrafieh 77511/26
Army, Marka 89161/115
915 680100
Queen Alia Hospital 607155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarga Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarga National Hospital (09)900560
Jbn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)989090
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)75655
Great Catholic Hospital (02)77275
Dr. Al-Nofes Hospital (02)747700
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)514111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by

ROYAL JORDANIAN (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:40 Beirut (RJ)
08:40 Aqaba (RJ)
09:40 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:00 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:10 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
12:45 Amsterdam, Detroit (RJ)
13:40 Geneva, Brussels (GF)
13:10 Paris (RJ)
13:10 Cairo, Alexandria (RJ)
14:25 Madrid (RJ)
14:35 London (RJ)
21:05 Larnaca (RJ)
21:20 Jeddah (RJ)
21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:45 Damascus (RJ)
22:25 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
23:30 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200. S. where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS
ROYAL JORDANIAN (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:10 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
08:40 Damascus (RJ)
09:15 Muscat (RJ)
10:15 Aqaba (RJ)
10:35 Beirut (RJ)
10:45 Al Ain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:50 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:40 Frankfurt (RJ)
17:50 London (RJ)
18:25 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
19:40 Cairo, Alexandria (RJ)
02:20 Madrid (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
04:20 Vienna (OS)
09:45 Cairo (MS)
13:40 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
14:00 Munich (VP)
14:00 Riyadh (SV)
14:20 Rome (AZ)
21:00 Aden (DY)
21:10 Beirut (ME)
23:20 Amsterdam (KL)
00:55 Bucharest (RO)

DEPARTURES
Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple 600/401
Banana 680
Banana (Mukammal) 620
Cabbage 140/80
Carrot 350/250
Cauliflower 240/180
Cucumbers (large) 150/100
Cucumbers (small) 260/180
Eggplant 300/120
Figs 370/250
Garlic 700/500
Grapes 750/600
Guava 800/600
Lemon 380/250
Marrow (large) 250/150
Marrow (small) 420/320
Mushrooms 140/100
Okra 800/700
Onion (dry) 240/180
Orange 450/350
Peaches 900/750
Pepper (hot) 200/100
Pepper (sweet) 200/100
Pomegranate 350/250
Potato 240/150
String Beans 680/500
Sweet Melon 330/250
Tomato 400/300
Water Melon 200/120

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
06:30 Damascus, Paris (AF)
08:45 Beirut (ME)
10:45 Cairo (MS)
13:40 Vienna (SD)
14:30 Abu Dhabi (GF)
14:55 Sharm Al Sheikh, Munich (VP)
15:20 Damascus (AZ)
15:30 Riyadh (SV)
22:00 Aden (DY)
00:25 Amsterdam (KL)
01:55 Bucharest (RO)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Princess Basma elected vice chairperson of Beijing conference for Asian region

By Caroline Faraj
Special to the Jordan Times

BEIJING — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, the head of the Jordanian delegation to the Fourth World Conference on Women which opened here Monday, has been elected vice chairperson of the conference for the Asian region.

Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and the heads of the Japanese, Malaysian and Syrian delegations share the same post with the Princess.

Princess Basma Monday visited Ms. Bhutto and discussed the role of Arab and Islamic nations at the Beijing conference.

The Princess praised Ms. Bhutto's role in representing Islamic views and discussed scopes of cooperation in social affairs between Jordan and Pakistan at the bilateral and non-governmental levels especially in matters relevant to women.

Princess Basma later received the head of the Botswana delegation and discussed coordinating the standpoints of Third World



countries at the conference.

Princess Basma also met with the executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Carol Bellamy to discuss cooperation between the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) and UNICEF.

The areas of particular interest to both organisations would be the expansion of kindergarten services and the development of social services for women and children in Jordan.

Earlier, the Princess chaired a meeting of the Jordanian delegation to the Beijing conference and reviewed the different issues contained within the international document to

Regent sees financial industry cooperation as road to international markets

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday told bank executives, industrialists, and insurance brokers that cooperation among their industries would greatly help Jordan move into the international financial market places.

Addressing the final session of a two-day meeting on topics related to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) conference, the Regent said he hoped the planned regional development bank will create bridges between Jordanian financial markets and international financial institutions.

The bank would help local financial institutions interact with and incorporate themselves into the world financial market, the Regent said.

The two-day meeting held at the Amman Marriott Hotel in Amman was attended by 50 delegates representing banking institutions and other companies.

The Regent said dialogue helps the exchange of ideas

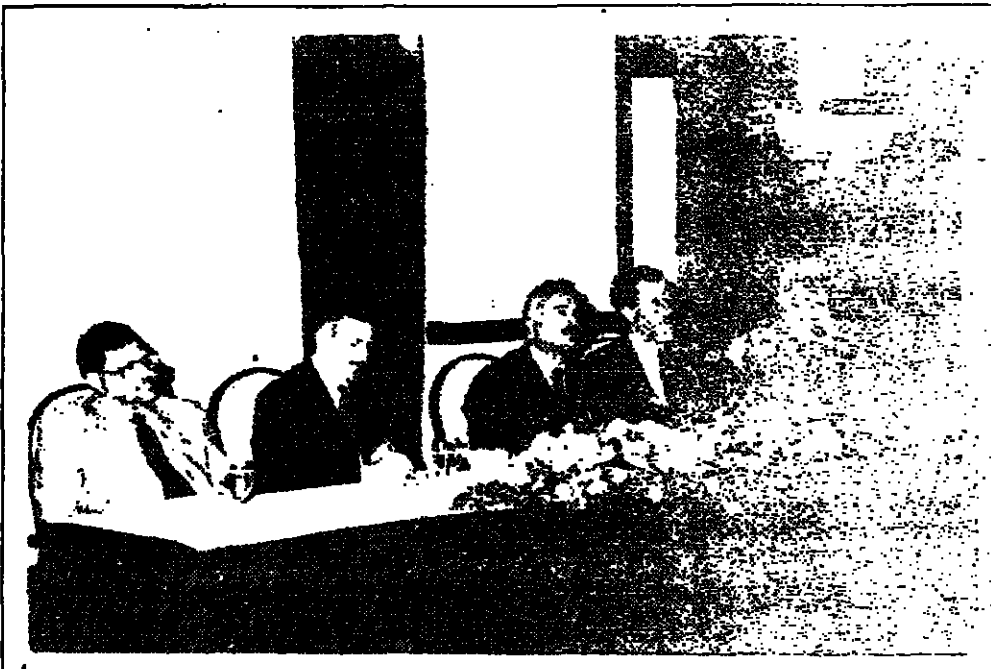
aimed at encouraging investments and urged the delegates to maintain their consultations and meetings especially after the conference is over.

The Regent said financial institutions and banks possess the mechanism and the expertise to play a key role in investments and in helping the Jordanian economy link up with world economies.

With Jordanian banks possessing assets estimated at more than \$8 billion, institutions should cooperate with the Central Bank of Jordan to promote the work of other sectors in the Jordanian economy through their expertise, the Regent said.

The Regent also urged local businesses and banking institutions to benefit from experiences of similar institutions in south Asia, Japan and Malaysia, countries, he said, that have achieved marked successes in helping their nations achieve development and prosperity.

The Regent called for the creation of institutions spe-



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday attends a meeting of bank executives, industrialists and insurance brokers during the conclusion of a two-day seminar organised as part of preparations for the October Middle East and North Africa conference (Petra photo)

cialising in legal affairs and economy-related contracting to serve as an informational source to local and foreign investors.

The government is expected to finalise proposed legislation designed to provide guarantees on investments, the Regent added.

The meeting was sponsored by the World Affairs Council in Amman and the Association of Banks in Jordan.

Officials say MENA conference to centre on four topics

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian officials Monday briefed the media on preparations for the coming Middle East and North Africa (MENA) conference scheduled to convene here next month saying that 1,000 participants, mainly businesspersons, are expected to take part in the three-day meetings.

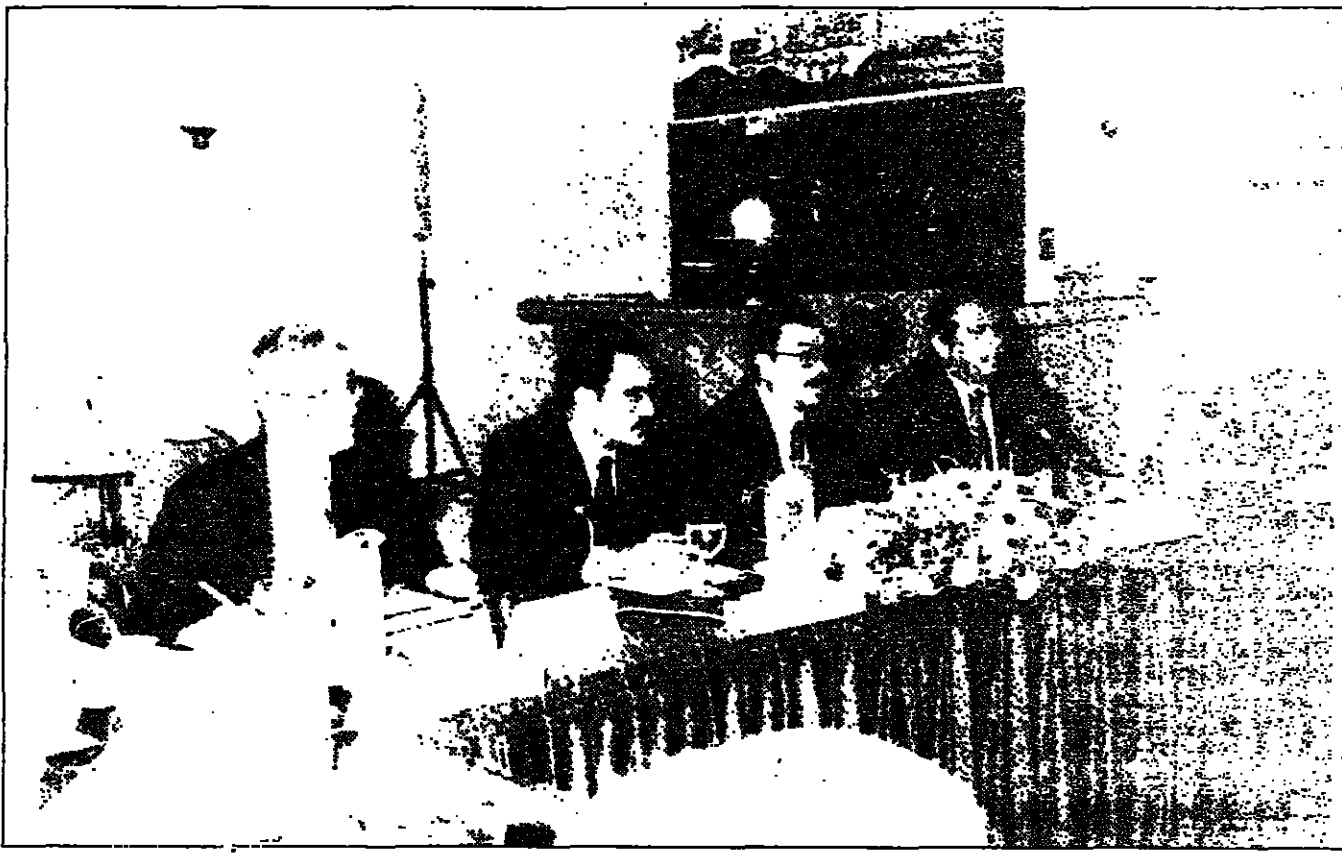
Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb told the meeting that the conference aims to help rehabilitate the economies of the region after years of military struggle and tension that kept them away from interacting with world economies.

He said that the MENA conference is expected to create an opportunity for Jordan to present its integrated and developed infrastructure, its opportune investment climate and its potential for absorbing investments at the regional and international levels.

The coming meeting will not be Jordanian in nature but rather will assume an international character and will reflect the tendency on the part of the countries of the region to move from a stage of making peace to a stage of building comprehensive peace through cooperation among themselves and with the rest of the world, said Mr. Abul Ragheb who heads a ministerial committee charged with preparing for the conference.

Noting that the past few years have witnessed the formation of world economic blocs, the minister said that the time has come for this region to create its own economic group, adding that the conference will also offer opportunities for launching such cooperation.

Reporting on the work of the steering committee for the conference, the minister said that it decided that dis-



Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb (second right) addresses the media at a meeting called to outline preparations for the Middle East and North Africa conference scheduled in October in Amman. On the podium from left to right are Director General of the Amman Financial Market Umayyah Tougan, Minister of Communications Jamal Sarairah, Mr. Abul Ragheb, and Ministry of Information Secretary General Nayef Maula (Petra photo)

cussions should centre on four points: infrastructure, trade and industry, financing and investment and economic environment.

Saying that the various participating parties still exchange views on the contents of the Amman MENA declaration, the minister said it is clear that the document will declare the following: agreement on important regional projects, the creation of a Middle East Development Bank, and the creation of a regional tourism council and a regional business council.

Referring to the role of the private sector, the minister said that it will be a full partner with the public sector in reconstruction and rehabilitation processes particularly in infrastructure projects.

With regard to the projects that will be submitted to the conference, the minister said that they will be drawn from four categories.

The first category includes 27 projects worth nearly \$3.5 billion in energy, industry, transport, communications, tourism, water, and the environment.

The second category includes 65 Jordanian small and medium size projects, and third category comprises projects that will be carried out in the Jordan Rift Valley.

The fourth category covers projects which will be submitted by the Jordanian private sector.

According to Mr. Abul Ragheb, the meetings will be held at the Royal Cultural Centre and the Palace of Culture of the Al Hussein Sports City, and various project plans will be printed and distributed to the delegates at the conference sessions.

Addressing Monday's meeting also, Umayyah Tougan, Director General of the Amman Financial Market, said that invitations had gone out to 60 countries around the world.

He said that a steering committee chaired by the United States has held three sessions to prepare for the conference and is planning to hold another meeting in Madrid on Sept. 14.

Dr. Tougan, who is the conference rapporteur, said

that most of the delegates expected to attend represent the private sector.

Another official, Bassem Awadallah, economic advisor at the Prime Ministry, told the meeting that the Jordanian government has provided \$5 million to finance the preparation of the main plan for the development of the Jordan Rift Valley, and the World Bank has offered \$250,000 to finance the preparation of tender documents for these schemes.

Dr. Awadallah said designs for these projects will take time to prepare, and some, such as the Red Sea-Dead Sea canal, would take 15 years to implement, while the search for funds to finance such projects would continue.

Yemeni minister visits Civil Service Consumer Corporation

AMMAN (Petra) — Yemeni Minister of Supply and Trade Mohammad Afandi Monday visited the Civil Service Consumer Corporation (CSCC) to get acquainted with the corporation's system and services to the public.

The CSCC sells goods to government employees and their families at reduced prices.

In 1994 the CSCC bought JD 20 million worth of commodities from the local market and JD 3 million from abroad, according to the corporation's Director Abdul Hadi Mahaiery, who accompanied the Yemeni delegation on a tour of CSCC stores.

In its 1994 operations the corporation made a 2.6 per cent profit on sales, said Mr.

Mahaiery.

Prices of goods sold at the CSCC stores were 30 to 40 per cent less than those in the local markets, he added.

The Yemeni minister said his country was keen to learn about consumer services from Jordan since Yemeni civil servants are also considered within the limited income group category.

Mr. Afandi also visited Jweideh stores operated by the Ministry of Supply to look at the system of storing supply commodities.

The Yemeni official and his accompanying delegation earlier met members of the Amman Chamber of Commerce to discuss Jordanian-Yemeni trade exchanges.

Commerce sources, Jordan last year imported nearly JD 3.4 million worth of Yemeni products and sold Yemen JD 7.3 million worth of national goods.

The sources said that in the first half of 1995 Jordan imported JD 700,000 worth of Yemeni goods and sold Yemen JD 4 million worth of Jordanian products.

Chamber of Commerce Vice Chairman Riad Saifi suggested that the two countries agree on a maritime transport system between Aqaba and Hudeidah ports to facilitate trade exchanges.

He also called for joint ventures by private sectors in both countries to promote trade and economic relations.

WHAT'S GOING ON

VIDEO FILM PROGRAMME

* "Films des Freres Lumiere," at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

PLAY

* Play (in Arabic) entitled "The Mule" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 7:30 p.m.

SHORT STORY RECITAL

* Recital of short-story by Mufleh Adwan at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at 7:00 p.m.

NEWS

* McNeil-Lehrer News Hour at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER '95 ACTIVITIES Lecture

* "Contemporary Arab Printmaking" by Rashid Diab, Rafa Nasiri and Dr. Khalid Khreis at 8:00 p.m.

Exhibitions

* Works of graphic art by several artists and students at the South Gallery.

* "Photography of Jordan, 'Elements in Harmony' by Hala Hodeib at the Blue House.

* Display of painted stone and steel, 'Embargo Art' by Iraqi artist Nuha Al Radi at the Garden of the Blue

House.

* "Early Morning Scribbles" by Lebanese artist Amin Al Basha and Jordanian artist Rajwa Bint Ali and "Late Night Scribbles" by Amin Al Basha and Jordanian artist Ali Bermamet.

* Sculpture by Rajwa Bint Ali at the Open Air Sculpture workshop.

* Ceramic shop at the Lower Garden.

* Works by contemporary Arab artists at the Central Gallery.

* 3-D experiments in calligraphy by Usama Khalidi at Library.

EXHIBITIONS

* Work by Ali Al 'Ubaidi at the Royal Cultural Centre.

* Works by Mohammad Ali Shakir at Ab'ad Art Gallery.

* Paintings by Palestinian artist Samira Badran at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman.

* Exhibition of Egyptian products at the Amman International Auto Show, Airport Road.

* Exhibition demonstrating the development of cinema over the past century at the French Cultural Centre.

'First rains expected'

AMMAN (Petra) — A cold front centred over Turkey could bring the early rains to the north of Jordan today just ahead of autumn, according to the Department of Meteorology.

A department spokesman Monday said skies will be cloudy to partly cloudy with temperatures at least six degrees below average for this time of year.

He added that there is a strong probability of showers in the north.

The highest temperature expected for Wednesday is 26°C, dropping to a low of 15°C at night, according to the department spokesman.

The southern and eastern parts of the Kingdom will be affected by sandy winds during the day.

Judge expels sabotage defendants from court

Trial of suspects in shooting of French diplomat opens today

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Seven people accused of sabotage appeared at the State Security Court Monday, but immediately disrupted courtroom activities by charging they did not believe in the court justice system.

When the defendants were called to the stand, they refused to come forward, saying "We are 'Ansar Allah' (meaning 'Supporters of God') and rejected the appointment of lawyers to defend them.

Presiding Judge Haiez Amin then expelled them from the courtroom.

The seven were part of a group of 13 men known as Bay'at Al Imam (pledge of allegiance to the leader), who were arrested before

actually carrying out any offence.

The remaining six suspects, most of them under 30, were released on bail pending trial. But when they failed to appear in court on Monday morning, a new arrest warrant was issued by Judge Amin.

Three court appointed lawyers were named to defend the suspects. They are: Asma Khader, Samih Hussein and Saleh Armouti.

The court set Sept. 24 as the date for the resumption of the trial.

According to sources who spoke to the Jordan Times last month, the group had "sub groups" which did not know of each other's existence.

be the "true followers" of Islamic faith and do not attend mosque prayers or schools because they reject the entire system, the sources said.

Meanwhile, the trial of two suspects accused of shooting and wounding a French diplomat last March will open today at the same court.

Salem Abdullah Jaradat and Ahmad Qassem, both 22, are accused in the Feb. 24 attack on Gil Heine, a second secretary at the French embassy.

They will be formally charged with attempted murder, plotting to carry out extremist attacks and possession of illegal arms and explosives.

According to the prosecutor charge sheet, the two sus-

pects, a school messenger and a furniture shop assistant, made explosive devices and wanted to take over a tourist bus in southern Jordan, but were dissuaded by the presence of security guards around the vehicle. The two then fled.

Shortly afterwards, they came across Mr. Heine and his wife who had stopped their car at a scenic spot in Wadi Mujib.

The suspects forced the couple to get into the car at gun point, the prosecution said.

Mr. Heine struggled with the assailants.

A police patrol noticed the quarrel and came to the rescue. The document said adding that the suspects then shot the envoy in the chest and foot.

Strike shuts down Karachi

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP) — A militant ethnic group shut down Pakistan's largest city of Karachi Monday with a strike to protest alleged police abuses of female activists.

At least eight people were killed overnight and Monday in strike-related violence, police said.

Among the dead was a plainclothes police officer, who was taken off a bus late Sunday by unidentified gunmen and executed, witnesses said.

A fellow officer, who was travelling with him, was taken by the gunmen and has not been seen since.

The killings occurred despite a government order to Karachi Security Force to shoot on sight anyone carrying a weapon or disturbing the peace.

The order, issued late Sun-

day by Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar, was strongly condemned by the Mohajir Qaumi Movement, the group that called the strike.

"No individual minister has the right to make his own laws... It is an incentive to kill people. It's the law of the jungle," Shoaib Bokhari, MQM spokesman, told the Associated Press.

Karachi, a bustling port city of 12 million people, was completely closed Monday. The Karachi Stock Exchange and financial institutions remained closed.

Operations at the Arabian Sea port ground to a halt and the usually teeming streets were largely deserted.

Police and rangers patrolled the more violent neighbourhoods in central and west Karachi in armoured personnel carriers

and jeeps mounted with machineguns.

In several neighbourhoods boys set at least 10 vehicles on fire, including a passenger bus, police said. In central Liaqatabad and Western Orangi neighbourhoods, young men with guns roamed the narrow lanes firing at police patrols and hiding.

Gunmen attacked a police patrol in central Karachi, injuring two officers, police said. Another three members of the security force were injured in separate firing incidents.

Strikes have become a regular means of protest for the MQM, which represents Indian Muslims who settled in Pakistan after independence in 1947. They say the government discriminates against Mohajirs denying them access to good jobs

and educational institutions.

MQM leaders say Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government is trying to crush the organisation, her biggest political opposition in Karachi.

Police blame much of the violence in Karachi in recent months on the largest faction of the MQM, led by Altaf Hussain, who lives in Britain. At least 1,300 people have been killed so far this year.

In recent weeks police and rangers have been conducting house-to-house searches in some of the hardest hit areas looking for weapons and militants.

International human rights groups and residents have accused the police of using excessive force, illegally detaining young men and taking bribes before releasing them.



Bangladeshi police use shotguns to disperse clashing pro-strike and anti-strike groups in Dhaka at the end of a 32-hour nationwide work stoppage (AFP photo)

Bangladesh women activists criticise Zia for ignoring rape, killing of girl

DHAKA (AFP) — Several hundred women in a rally here Monday criticised Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khaleda Zia for taking part in the Beijing U.N. World Conference on Women while ignoring the alleged rape and killing of a girl by police last week.

"She (Zia) should not attend the conference and speak about the empowerment of women while keeping the women of her own country insecure and vulnerable," said activist Farida Akhter.

She said Mrs Zia should have cancelled the trip to take action against those responsible for the girl's death.

Yasmin Akhter, 14, was allegedly raped and killed by police in northern Dinajpur district last week. A government probe is under way after seven more people were killed in anti-police demonstrations.

Three policemen allegedly involved in the incident have been arrested and top district officials were transferred.

Mrs Zia, Bangladesh's first woman premier, currently in Beijing, has not yet commented on the incident.

"The Dinajpur incident was not a separate one, rather it was the continuation of police atrocities against innocent people, especially women," said

Khushi Kabir, chairman of the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh.

No legal bar in Bangladesh prevented women from being arrested anywhere or anytime, Ms. Kabir said. "How can police enjoy such powers?" she said.

It was unfortunate that women had to take to the streets to demand punishment of those who were supposed to provide security, Ms. Kabir added.

Rally participants also demanded the resignation of Bangladeshi Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury for alleged inaction.

Britain, Ireland meet on N. Irish peace deadlock

DUBLIN (R) — The British and Irish governments held crunch talks Monday to defuse a crisis over the decommissioning of IRA guerrilla arms which has brought their year-old Northern Ireland peace drive to a standstill.

Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring and Britain's Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, met in Dublin at the start of a crucial week for Anglo-Irish efforts to convene all-party talks on a lasting political settlement.

Neither minister made any comments to waiting reporters.

Sir Patrick was then due to travel to the Northern Ireland capital Belfast for a meeting with Gerry Adams, president of the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) political

wing Sinn Fein.

The meetings are supposed to lay the groundwork for an Anglo-Irish summit in Britain Wednesday at which new proposals to breathe life into the peace process are expected to be unveiled.

But there are signs they will run into stiff opposition from Sinn Fein, which seeks to end British rule of Northern Ireland, because they may seek to get the IRA to disarm before Britain convenes talks on a political settlement.

Mr. Adams said at the weekend there was no way the IRA would contemplate handing over weapons used in a 25-year war against Britain and repeated his call for a date to be set for all-party talks.

But Britain says no political group can come to the

conference table as long as it has an army of supporters still in possession of weapons it might use to resume its war if the discussions founder.

Irish officials say British Prime Minister John Major and his Irish counterpart John Bruton will establish an international commission Wednesday to oversee the surrender of IRA and Protestant loyalist weapons.

But Mr. Adams has made clear there will be no point in establishing such a body if its brief is to take IRA arms out of service before all-party talks are launched.

George Mitchell, a former U.S. senator who heads President Bill Clinton's Ireland economy advisory team, is expected to head the commission and involve Washington directly in the

peace process for the first time.

Sources close to the peace process said the Dublin government believes a commitment by the IRA not to use its arsenal first or for any reason other than self-defence might help break the peace process log-jam.

Protestant loyalist gunmen, who fought for 25 years to keep Northern Ireland British, made a similar pledge this month and have called on their IRA rivals to do likewise.

The rival guerrillas called ceasefires last year which have led to 12 months of rare peace but little real progress towards reconciling Protestant determination to keep Northern Ireland British and Catholic dreams of a re-united Ireland.

U.N. refugee chief flies to Rwanda for talks on refugees

DAR ES SALAAM (R) — U.N. refugee chief Sadako Ogata, having little luck in resolving the problem of bringing home Rwandan refugees, flew to Rwanda Monday after Tanzania hinted it might forcibly remove them from its soil.

Mrs. Ogata, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, (UNHCR), left for Kigali on the fourth leg of a tour to Kenya, Burundi, Tanzania, Rwanda and Zaire undertaken after Zaire tried to throw out refugees there last month.

Tanzanian Prime Minister Cleopa Msuya, meeting Mrs. Ogata Monday, turned down her appeal for the country to reopen its borders with Rwanda and Burundi.

"Tanzania has made its position very clear and though she does not approve there is a mutual understanding," UNHCR representa-

tive Andrew Sokiri told Reuters.

"We want the international community to work towards the return of the refugees to their countries of origin as quickly as possible," Defence Minister Abdulrahman Kinana said after meeting Mrs. Ogata Sunday.

Mr. Msuya also made a veiled threat that Tanzania would follow the Zairean example of expelling refugees. The deportations stopped after 15,000 refugees were thrown out of eastern Zaire.

"We hope we shall not be pushed into a corner and be forced to use crude methods," Mr. Msuya was quoted by his office as saying.

The issue was indirectly broached and Madame Ogata was told that, though Tanzania wants a quick solution to the problem, it is a civilised nation which

would not rush into anything," a U.N. official said.

Tanzania says it cannot indefinitely continue to give asylum for the 712,000 Rwandan and Burundian refugees in camps in the west of the country near the borders with Rwanda and Burundi.

Tanzania blames the refugees for insecurity and many crimes, including the murder of more than 80 Tanzanians, and in March shut its borders with Rwanda and Burundi to stop more crossing.

Many are Rwandan Hutus who fled during last year's civil war and say they fear being killed in reprisal for the genocide of up to a million Tutsis and Hutu moderates if they return.

Officials said Mrs. Ogata had promised to convey to Rwandan authorities Tanzania's suggestion that they

provide security guarantees in an effort to persuade the refugees to return soon.

Zairean officials told Mrs. Ogata last week all Rwandan and Burundian refugees in camps in Zaire should be repatriated before the end of the year otherwise the army would resume expulsions.

About 200,000 of the 259,000 Burundian refugees in Tanzania have been here since 1972, when thousands of Hutus were slaughtered in Burundi. Refugee officials say there are huge problems involved in returning them to their former homes.

In Kigali, Mrs. Ogata was expected to seek renewed assurances from Rwanda's government that would speed the return of refugees. She is also scheduled to visit camps in eastern Zaire.

Solemn services mark 50th anniversary of World War II's end

HONOLULU (AP) — Paying a final tribute to America's aging warriors, President Clinton attended solemn religious services Sunday in a prayerful search for lessons of "the tragedy of World War II."

In surprisingly brief remarks capping V-J Day commemorations, Mr. Clinton said historians looking back centuries from now will say the war showed that people will reject repression and prejudice to fight for freedom.

"I believe the lesson will be that people, when given a choice, will not choose to live under empire; that citizens, when given a choice, will not choose to live under dictators; that people, when given the opportunity to let the better angels of their natures rise to the top, will not embrace theories of political or racial or ethnic or religious superiority," he said.

On a day filled with hymns and hallelujahs, Mr. Clinton spoke for less than five minutes — allowing the poignant words of veterans to resonate.

The president and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton parted after the services.

Mr. Clinton headed to California for a two-day trip. Mrs. Clinton left for China, where she will address an international women's conference.

Both trips are heavy with political implications. Mr. Clinton's 26th trip to California marks a new stage in his re-election campaign, with a heavy travel schedule ahead this fall.

Mrs. Clinton hopes to spotlight women's rights issues in China, while delicately avoiding a confrontation with the Communist regime. Aides hope the trip pays dividends domestically: woman are a huge voting bloc that favoured Mr. Clinton in 1992.

During the Sunday commemorative ceremony, participants delivered moving speeches, listened to Buddhist and Hawaiian prayers and sang "Amazing Grace" and "America The Beautiful" on the hillside amphitheatre lined by palm trees. More than 2,500 people attended the non-denominational services, held in steamy weather at the Waikiki Band Shell.

Col. Harry Fukuhara, a Japanese immigrant in U.S. Army Intelligence during

World War II had two brothers in Japanese suicide units as the war drew to a close. Their mission — never carried out — targeted sites near Fukushima's unit.

The wrinkled war hero told a hushed crowd, "thanks to a higher power, meeting my two brothers on the battlefield was avoided."

Sen. Howell Heflin, a decorated World War II veteran, read from the Bible, then concluded: "The prayer of the veterans of World War II is there will never be a World War III."

The service marked the end of several years of World War II observances. Former President George Bush came to Pearl Harbour on Dec. 7, 1991, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack that brought the United States into the war.

Mr. Clinton, the first president born after World War II, travelled to Normandy, France, last year to celebrate D-Day, the landing of allied forces that led to the end of the war in Europe. And last May 9, Mr. Clinton went to Red Square in Moscow for a Victory Day tribute to the 27 million Soviets who died defeating Nazi Germany.

In three days on Hawaii, the site of the first bloody blows against America in World War II, Mr. Clinton helped commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Japanese surrender to allied troops.

The commander-in-chief attended a military parade and review, visited a military cemetery, rode a barge through Pearl Harbour and threw a flower petal in the steel-blue waters washing over the USS Arizona, where more than 1,100 Americans remain entombed.

On Sunday, he touched again on a theme he used throughout the weekend, saying, "whatever differences there are among us, we have more in common."

That point, he said, "better be the ultimate lesson we learn from the tragedy of World War II."

A variety of protesters, many of whom opposed nuclear testing in France, sang and chanted behind fences at the back of the outdoor theatre, creating a minor disturbance for people in the last rows of the service.

Filipinos plucked from mudflows

BACOLOR, Philippines (R) — Helicopters, trucks and boats rescued about 1,000 people marooned on rooftops Monday by a torrent of volcanic debris swept down from the Philippines' Mount Pinatubo.

Among the evacuees was a woman who had just given birth to a baby boy on the roof of her home, the mayor of Bacolor told reporters.

Bacolor residents said the first mudflows began to appear around 9 p.m. (1300 GMT) Sunday evening and eight hours later had reached a depth of two metres.

They said the torrent was the worst of a series of mudflows from Pinatubo since it erupted in 1991 in one of the century's biggest volcanic explosions.

"This is the worst," said Jaime Pallaniqui, 46.

Mr. Pallaniqui said he had refused to be evacuated fearing people would plunder

what was left of his inundated home. He also said he was afraid of disease from crowded evacuation centres.

"The helicopters and trucks are picking people from the roofs of their houses. Many do not want to leave their belongings behind," Emma Tabalanza of the regional disaster relief office in Pampanga province said.

"They do not want to get on the helicopters," she added.

Relief officials said many of the people evacuated Monday had just returned to their homes after being forced to flee by typhoon Kent last week.

No casualties have so far been reported from the latest floods, caused by heavy rains from another storm called Nina with winds of up to 70 kilometres per hour.

Typhoon Kent killed five people when it swept

through the country.

Worst hit was the town of Bacolor, home to around 20,000. Only the rooftops of some houses were visible.

"These people just do not want to leave Bacolor," Mr. Tabalanza said.

The weather bureau warned that more rains were likely with Nina due to slice across the main Philippine island of Luzon later Monday.

"Heavy rains will fall on Pinatubo volcano so we are warning people to leave dangerous areas," a forecaster said.

The mudflows have become an annual rainy season ordeal for people living around Pinatubo. Scientists say millions of tonnes of volcanic debris remain on the volcano's flanks.

Heavy rain loosens the still hot debris, sending it crashing down onto nearby communities.

Hurricane Luis bears down on Caribbean

LONG GROUND, Montserrat (R) — Residents of this tiny island, who spent the past seven weeks living with the threat of a deadly volcanic eruption, prepared Monday to face an even more lethal foe, hurricane Luis and its screaming 140 mph (225 kph) winds.

Luis, the most powerful hurricane to emerge in the busiest season in decades, was expected to lash Montserrat and the neighbouring Caribbean islands beginning late Monday night, according to the National Hurricane Centre in Miami.

At 11 p.m. EDT (0300 GMT Monday), Luis was located 571 kilometres east of the Leeward Islands and was churning due west at 14 mph (22 kph), hurricane centre forecasters said.

Hurricane warnings were issued from St. Martin to

Antigua, and hurricane watches were in effect for the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Tropical storm warnings were issued for nearby Guadeloupe and Dominica.

Forecasters said there were indications that Luis might slow down and creep across the Leeward Islands, which would pound island homes and businesses with hours or even days of dangerous winds and rain. At its current direction and speed, Luis was expected to slam into Puerto Rico Wednesday, they said.

The hurricane had an unusually large eye, estimated at about 56 kilometres wide, and its powerful winds extended outward for some 225 kilometres.

Residents of Antigua, Montserrat and the other Leeward Islands swung into action, boarding up win-

dows, fuelling cars and stockpiling canned goods and drinking water.

Most needed little encouragement, remembering only too well the devastation wrought by similar-sized hurricane Hugo in 1989. Hugo was blamed for the deaths of more than two dozen Caribbean residents. It caused billions of dollars worth of damage to tourist hotels, private homes and businesses. The storm roared across a half-dozen islands before turning north to hit South Carolina.

On Montserrat, Hugo destroyed more than 95 per cent of the island's homes, where some 12,000 residents live.

The path of hurricane Luis was a cruel blow to a tiny British colony known for its verdant landscapes, peaceful lifestyle, and proud but friendly people.

Yawn, I've never had so much fun

LONDON (R) — An anti-depressant drug is giving patients an uplifting bonus — when they yawn, they have an orgasm. British newspapers quoted a scientific study published in the latest edition of New Scientist magazine. The report said five per cent of patients taking the drug Clomipramine had noticed the side-effect, which had also been noticed by people taking another drug, Prozac, even though the normal effect of both drugs is to inhibit sexual desire. The discovery could herald a new era in sexual relationships, the newspapers said.

American dancer wins award

EDINBURGH, Scotland (R) — American dancer Mark Morris has won the 1995 Hamada Award, set up as top prize for artistic excellence at the Edinburgh Festival by a mysterious Japanese businessman who has since disappeared without trace. Morris and his troupe have been a sell-out success at the Edinburgh Festival for three years running. The Scotsman newspaper provides a judging panel for the award, named for a Japanese businessman who set up the Hamada Foundation with a £500,000 (\$775,800) cash gift. A regular festival visitor for many years, Zenya Hamada has not been seen since the 1993 awards luncheon.

Swimming ritual attracts 10,000 Taiwanese

TAIPEI (R) — More than 10,000 Taiwanese swam across the island's scenic Sun Moon Lake in a time-honoured ritual to celebrate the upcoming Chinese mid-autumn festival, or the Moon Festival, an organiser said. Participants aged between six and 84 took part in the mass swim across the four-kilometre mountain lake in the central county of Nantou, an organiser said by telephone. The activity is held every year in the Sun Moon Lake before the mid-autumn festival, one of the most important Chinese festivals, on the 15th day of the lunar month of August. It falls on Sept. 9 this year.

Sally Field wants more clout for women

HUAIROU, China (AP) — Sally Field says working with poor women and children in Nepal has made her think twice about her priorities. The actress told the world's biggest women's conference in China Sunday that she'll keep crusading for more clout for women in Hollywood, even though her recent humanitarian work has made that fight seem less important. "How can I talk about women in film now?" said the two-time Academy Award winner. "It seems such a great luxury to be able to talk about the arts." Field, who was in Nepal for the Save the Children charity, spoke to participants at a non-governmental gathering paralleling the United Nations' fourth World Conference on Women.

Filipino censor defends ban on Streep movie

MANILA (AFP) — The Philippines' chief censor Monday defended a ban on the movie The Bridges of Madison County that fleetingly showed American actress Meryl Streep's pubic hair, saying it was offensive to Filipino women and culture. Movie and Television Review and Classification Board chief Henrieta Mendez also slammed Hollywood for cultural imperialism, saying it was trying to impose U.S. values on other countries. The film, based on the novel of the same name, chronicles a torrid, four-day midlife romance between a National Geographic magazine photographer played by Clint Eastwood and a bored Iowa housewife played by Streep.

Powell turned down CIA spot under Bush, considered as Clinton's partner

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Retired General Colin Powell says in his new book that he turned down offers to be George Bush's CIA director and was approached as a possible running mate for Bill Clinton in 1992.

Newsweek magazine said.

The autobiography My American Journey does not provide any clues as to whether Gen. Powell will run — as an independent or a Republican — for the presidency in 1996, according to Newsweek. But the book, which is scheduled to arrive on the shelves next week, underscores how hot a political property Gen. Powell has been regarded by both parties.

In 1992, he was asked to consider being Mr. Clinton's vice presidential running mate and was twice

approached about becoming his secretary of state.

White House spokesman Michael McCurry acknowledged, but downplayed overtures that then-candidate and later president Mr. Clinton made to Gen. Powell.

"The president cast a very wide net and considered a variety of people as he was searching for a running mate," Mr. McCurry said. "It is no secret that President Clinton has very high regard for Gen. Powell, as do many Americans."

He said Mr. Clinton offered the job "to the individual who accepted it, Al Gore."

As for the secretary of state post, McCurry said it should not "come as a surprise" that Mr. Clinton interviewed possible candidates

for the job since Secretary Warren Christopher had expressed concerns about not staying on at the end of 1994.

"Obviously, these are very tentative personal discussions and apparently Gen. Powell has felt free to write about that," Mr. McCurry said. "That's his right as an American."

Gen. Powell, 58, was serving as commander of the joint chiefs of staff in 1992 and left the position the following year to begin his retirement.

According to Newsweek, which obtained a copy of the 613-page book, President-elect George Bush offered Gen. Powell the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) director slot, but the general turned it down.

A poll published by the

news magazine found that Gen. Powell would come in third with 21 per cent of the vote if he were to run as an independent against Mr. Clinton and Senate majority leader Bob Dole. Under such a scenario, Mr. Clinton would win with 36 per cent of the vote and Sen. Dole would take 33 per cent.

But if Gen. Powell ran as the Republican candidate, he would defeat Mr. Clinton by as much as 10 percentage points, the poll found.

He also would help Sen. Dole to a 51-44 per cent victory over Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gore if he ran as the Republicans' vice presidential candidate.

Gen. Powell has planned a 25-city tour to promote the \$35 book.

Sri Lanka's Tamil rebels attack huge air force base

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels launched mortar bombs on a sprawling air force base on the rebel-held Jaffna peninsula in the north Monday, the military said.

The Tigers attacked the strategic Palali camp, where the rebels shot down two air force Avro transport planes in April killing more than 100 servicemen, it said. The army's operational headquarters in Colombo confirmed the attack had taken place but said it could not release any details.

Palali is the largest military base on the Jaffna peninsula and the backbone of the armed forces' operation Leap Forward offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) launched in July.

There were no reports of casualties or damage but to reach the base the rebels must have penetrated the army's forward defence lines a three kilometres to the south.

The Tigers are fighting for a homeland in the north and east in a war that has killed more than 50,000 people since 1983.

Meanwhile the Sri Lankan government, locked in a standoff with Tamil rebels holding civilians on a hijacked ferry, appears to be

bracing for a military showdown with the separatist guerrillas, analysts said Monday.

The Foreign Ministry put its foot down Sunday, stressing there was no chance of a quick resumption of peace talks with the LTTE, dashing apparent U.S. hopes of a return to the negotiating table.

The military is not divulging details, but it is widely believed to be planning an offensive on the rebel-held Jaffna town, capitalising on territorial gains made in July.

It has to move before October when the northeast rains set in, the seas become choppy and transport of food and supplies by land, air and sea becomes difficult. Otherwise it can wait until April and have six or seven months of dry weather.

"If I were in charge, I wouldn't want to go now," said former air force chief Air Vice Marshal Harry Goonetilleke. "I would wait until April. But there is a political timetable the government has to follow. It wants to end the war this year."

Vice Marshal Goonetilleke said he had heard of plans last week to send in between 30,000 and 35,000 men to launch a huge offensive. A

couple of days ago it was called off, at least for now.

President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga introduced devolution proposals for minority Tamils last month in response to the LTTE's war for a Tamil homeland in the north and east.

The Tigers refused invitations to view the proposals, broke a three-month ceasefire in April and stepped up attacks.

Now ministers stress that the only way forward is to weaken the LTTE militarily to coincide with the introduction of the devolution plan, preferably by the end of the year.

The Tigers were holding about 150 people hostage after hijacking a north-bound ferry a week ago and the International Committee of the Red Cross, mediating at the government's request, said Monday only that talks continued.

People travelling south from Jaffna Monday said a siege mentality appeared to be setting in. The Voice Of Tiger radio was warning people not to talk about the situation in Jaffna.

Mrs. Kumaratunga, her mother, Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike and senior cabinet ministers have all been making hawkish com-

ments on chances for war and peace in Sri Lanka.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said Sunday there was no chance of reopening peace talks with the Tigers, contradicting visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Robin Raphel, who told reporters Friday Colombo appeared keen to resume talks.

Mrs. Bandaranaike said last week that hurting the LTTE militarily was the only way to force a return to the negotiating table. "How can you solve any problem when you have a stubborn lot of Tigers who are blood-thirsty," she told Reuters. "The only way is to weaken them first."

Mrs. Kumaratunga said last month the only channel of communication with the LTTE was the "barrel of the gun."

And Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar told reporters on Aug. 25 that the LTTE would have to lay down their arms, at least symbolically, and renounce "Eelam", their would-be homeland, before the government considered resuming peace talks.

"They only know force," he said, adding that in the meantime "there has to be an application of a superior force."

Kashmir rebels kill 13 in car bomb

SRINAGAR, India (R) — Kashmir separatists detonated a car bomb in Srinagar Monday, killing at least 13 people in an audacious attack in the centre of the heavily fortified city, witnesses said.

The Hizbul Mujaheddin guerrilla group claimed responsibility in a telephone call to a Western news agency and said the bomb was aimed at Indian soldiers outside a bank in the city centre.

Witnesses said five of the dead appeared to be soldiers.

Officials at the government-run hospital where casualties were brought said 20 wounded were admitted, and three were in surgery. One died on arrival.

The bomb went off in a car near a police station and outside a branch of the government-owned State Bank of India, where Indian soldiers fighting the separatist insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir congregate at the beginning of every month to col-

lect their pay.

A bomb placed on a scooter in almost exactly the same location in late 1992 killed two people and shopkeepers had been pressing authorities for payments to the soldiers to be made elsewhere.

The explosion was just down the road from Ahdoo's, one of the only hotels left open in the city and packed full of foreign journalists covering the Kashmir hostage crisis, which entered its third month Monday.

Witnesses said there was an army truck parked in the vicinity when the bomb went off at around 1.30 p.m. (0800 GMT). Three cars and five scooters were destroyed in the blast.

The wheels had been blown off one car and the tin roofs of shops opposite were riddled with holes from the debris.

"I was going to buy food when I heard a huge explosion. The next thing I knew I was lying on the ground

with injuries to my neck and stomach," hotel worker Ghulam Qadir Khan told Reuters at the hospital where he was being treated.

"It's only the poor like me who suffer," he said.

Witnesses saw 12 bodies after the blast, two of them women and five others dressed in military uniform. Some of the corpses were badly mutilated.

Security forces arrived quickly and carried off the bodies. Police cordoned off the area saying there could be another bomb.

The blast was preceded by a grenade explosion the guerrillas said was meant to warn civilians away from the car bomb.

Police and hospital sources say more than 20,000 people have been killed in the five-year insurgency by separatist militants in Jammu and Kashmir, predominantly Hindu India's only Muslim majority state.

An unusually large number of foreign journalists,

Western diplomats and hostage crisis advisers are in Srinagar while negotiations continue to secure the release of four Western tourists held by guerrillas in the Kashmir Valley since early July.

Donald Hutchings and John Childs of the United States and Paul Wells and Keith Mangan of Britain were kidnapped by the Al-Faran guerrilla group on July 4 while trekking in the Himalayan region.

Four days later Mr. Childs escaped and Al-Faran abducted German Dirk Hasert and Norwegian Hans Christian Ostroe. The Norwegian was found beheaded on Aug. 13.

Al-Faran, previously unknown even to Kashmiri separatist groups, has threatened several times to kill all the hostages unless India frees at least 15 jailed militants, including three Pakistanis.

Winnie Mandela caught in scuffle with China police

BEIJING (R) — Winnie Mandela, estranged wife of South African President Nelson Mandela, was caught in a heated shoving match with Chinese security forces at the World Women's Conference Monday and failed to attend the welcome ceremony.

Mrs. Mandela and 20 other South African delegates turned up at Beijing's famed Great Hall of the People for a formal welcoming ceremony

by the Chinese hosts of the United Nations fourth World Conference on Women.

But the doors were locked and guarded by security guards and the group tried unsuccessfully to force a way inside.

"We have been waiting here with other women," Mrs. Mandela told reporters after the scuffle. "We came on time ... And we found

other women waiting here.

"I thought they were processing their entry but in fact they were preventing them from going in, so some complained."

They had invitations for the elaborate ceremony in the cavernous hall attended by thousands of delegates and addressed by Chinese President Jiang Zemin.

For security reasons, the guards did not allow them to

enter the hall after the stipulated starting time.


"Let us in, let us in," the group chanted bringing other security guards running to the scene and the South Africans were quickly surrounded and outnumbered.

"They delayed us, they took us to a wrong venue, that is why we were late," said one delegate, who blamed the bus driver. "By the time we arrived they said it was not possible to enter."



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Writers are not policemen

THE JORDAN Writers Association (JWA) is going too far in its actions against actor Hisham Yanis for visiting Israel and for contemplating together with co-actor Nabil Sawalha to show their popular theatre production "Welcome Normalisation" in Israel. JWA maintains that these contacts and visits violate its "code of honour," and threatened to take disciplinary action against Mr. Yanis which may entail his expulsion from the association.

With all due respect to JWA and its views against normalisation with Israel, we believe that this kind of perspective is contrary to the law of the land after the peace treaty with Israel was duly signed and ratified. The attempt by some trade and professional associations to override the treaty and its implications is a prescription for an unnecessary confrontation between the state and such groups. The government has already called on trade unions and associations to stick to their immediate scope of concern and to refrain from going political. While we are against curbing any freedoms or rights of any group or individual, we still believe that associations have no business making restrictions on their members in a manner that runs counter to the law of the land.

Over and above these considerations, we cannot fault Messrs. Yanis and Sawalha for visiting Israel or for even describing Israeli women as beautiful. It should not be a crime to depict women as beautiful or otherwise since above all beauty is in the eye of the beholder. There are many Arabs living in Israel enjoying Israeli citizenship, through no fault of theirs. They cannot be viewed as traitors by any stretch of the imagination. Contacting them or the people with whom they cohabit is sensible, reasonable, useful and necessary. JWA is the last Arab institution that should frown on opportunities to carry out culture and points of view to the other side. We think JWA should reconsider its policy on this issue and adopt a new code of honour that is in tune with common sense and the new realities.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON the latest Syrian moves in the Middle East political scene, a writer in Al Dustour said Monday that Damascus is motivated by the developments in Iraq and its desire to reassert its own role in the region. Saleh Qallab expressed the belief that the Syrian President has embarked on contacts with Iran and Egypt after careful calculations and deep considerations, and after ascertaining that changes in Iraq are bound to happen. Hafez Al Assad has kept silent since the defection to Jordan last month by two top Iraqi army officers, simply because he was not ready for these developments, which took Syria and many other Middle Eastern players by surprise, said the writer. But, he said, Mr. Assad has been undoubtedly in close contact with Iraqi opposition groups, including army officers since 1970, and he still hopes to unify the ruling Baath parties in Syria and Iraq. No doubt Mr. Assad still considers himself the remaining godfather of the Baath Party, and should any change happen, said the writer, he would hope to have a say in it, and would like to see Syria at the forefront in any moves to bring about changes in Iraq through military or peaceful means.

A WRITER in Al Ra'i addressed the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs' plans for convening a national conference on municipalities by the middle of September and the main problems which the conference is bound to tackle. Nazih said that the newly elected municipal councils and mayors who have given many promises to the voters in the election campaigns in July, are eager to keep their promises but are confronted with the reality that their coffers are empty and could not carry out the promised projects and the improved municipal services. The main issue facing the coming conference, stressed the writer, is the lack of funds at the local councils, which by no means can achieve miracles to satisfy the voters' wishes and fulfil their dreams.

The View from Fourth Circle

Shopping for cotton socks and the Arab future

By Rami G. Khouri

IF YOU want better to understand the grandeur and the agony of the contemporary Arab World, do as I have done in the last several weeks: Go shopping for 100 per cent cotton socks in Damascus and Cairo.

To shop for cotton socks in the great citadels of Arab urbanism is no ordinary commercial enterprise. This is not like, for example, popping into the Radio Shack shop on Gardens Street in Amman, the Toys 'R Us shop in Jeddah, or the Safeway in suburban Kuwait to transact purchases of some hard plastic commodities imported from some distant factories. Cairo and Damascus are different, richer urban places than the rest of the Arab World, and shopping for indigenous production there is a more meaningful yet demanding experience in both political and emotional terms.

My quest for the great Arab cotton socks was neither merely an exercise in particularist consumerism nor a directionless adventure in urban wandering. It was a combination of the two that had deeper implications for me about the condition of the Arab Nation (for those readers for whom the term 'Arab Nation' is perplexing or even jarring, I suggest relaxing in cotton garb and substituting the term with Arab region or Arab World). For me and many others in this area, Damascus and Cairo retain something special yet intangible — a feeling, a hope, a memory, a vague sense of self-confident Arabism, maybe only a comfortable ancient humanism that endures because it is based on the increasingly evasive logic and dynamism of what once made Arab cities great. The cotton socks, I suspect, may have been only the excuse that I used to spend hours walking around both cities.

The most personally and politically irritating thing that struck me about both Cairo and Damascus — cities that I have known and loved for most of my adult life — was the large number of security personnel especially but not only around government buildings. This is not peculiar to Cairo or Damascus in the modern Arab World, where security is usually the leading concern and largest expenditure of governments. What is so incongruous about the proliferation of armed security personnel in these two capital cities is the shocking contrast between the past and the present — between historical centres of great culture that once enriched the entirety of human civilisation on earth, and contemporary tensions that necessitate a desperate and sad resort to massive violence and the presence of armed guards on most street corners.

It was pretty distracting trying to find the perfect pair of cotton socks amidst so many soldiers and plainclothes security personnel. But — stimulated as I was by the faded riches of urban history and the still visible glory of centuries past — I persevered. I was determined to warm my feet in the soft comfort of 100 per cent Arab cotton, even if my spirit were to remain plagued by the agony of Arab political violence. I was intellectually and politically prepared to defend this exercise against even the most fearsome interrogation or show of force. Any armed policeman or security person who stopped me and asked what I was doing peering around corners and into shops and asking many questions would be told that I was in search of Arab

grandeur in the form of 100 per cent cotton socks. I would not be intimidated.

The deterioration of the quality of modern Arab political culture in Damascus and Cairo was as visible as the equally glaring and lamentable deterioration in the fabric of the urban architecture. Cairo and Damascus are the only two Arab cities I know of — Algiers and Beirut get close, but they speak very softly these days — whose cultured urbanism is so deep that they could absorb a thick veneer of European architectural design in the 19th and early 20th centuries without destroying the underlying strengths of Arab cultural urbanism.

Despite their significant recent economic problems and political stress, the streets of Cairo and Damascus still speak of an audacious attempt at the turn of the century to become European. The grandeur and beauty of this attempt are visible to the eye today — streets that look Parisian, faded old tearooms that are very Viennese, shops that speak of London's venerable mercantile tradition. The impressive thing about Cairo and Damascus at the end of the 19th century was not that they dared to absorb the single most powerful global cultural-ideological force of the second millennium — the European Enlightenment in its expansive and often predatory colonial garb — but that they effectively succeeded in doing so without significantly upsetting the indigenous elements of urbanism that had made Cairo and Damascus such important cities by the middle of the 19th century.

My quest for the perfect Arab cotton socks, I realised, was not only about warming my feet but also about warming my spirit. I was fed up and mad about the ignominy of the modern Arab order — of politically and militarily violent Arab governments that treated their own people and other Arabs with only erratic respect and dignity, and of individual Arabs who were so despairing of improving their quality of life that they sought refuge in amassing personal riches while neglecting their wider responsibility to society as a whole.

The despair of ordinary families throughout the Arab World was leading to heightened political tensions that were in turn leading to greater misuse of power by unelected, unaccountable governments whose circles of supporters and advisers were consistently narrowing onto a smaller and ever more incestuous base. The outlet for most families, it seemed, was to watch imported junk on television and go shopping for imported junk in new mega-stores while acquiescing in new brands of home-grown political morality characterised by the increasingly violent and intemperate tendencies of ruling establishments and growing oppositions.

This was hard for me to accept as the fate of the modern Arab Nation. There had to be signs of better ways, and I suspected that such signs were to be found in those places that had alternately generated and preserved the finest traditions of Arab culture and civilisation — our great Arab cities. I was not disappointed, for both Damascus and Cairo today, despite their political and economic challenges, retain the powerful elements of Arab/Islamic urban

culture that have been such important factors in the continuous renewal of Arab identity and culture for many centuries.

Perhaps the single most important element in this respect is the tradition of demographic pluralism and civility, of many different religions and ethnic groups living and working together to generate the kind of intellectual, economic and cultural dynamism that allowed these and other Arab cities to become such important international centres of trade, thought and science. The best Arab urbanism was, and remains, a synthesis of different identities and traditions; distinct quarters for Jews, Christians, Armenians, Kurds and other minorities were not necessarily barriers to their people's inclusion in society but delineators of identities that are formally accepted and protected by the dominant Arab/Islamic culture.

This powerful synthesis of human identities still defines the great Arab cities of Cairo and Damascus. Like the beautiful architectural elements that still force themselves on the visitor from behind the faded paint and cracked facades of old buildings, the multi-cultural, humanistic vigour of old Arab urbanism still defiantly pokes its durable and beautiful head out of the jungle of political violence and materialistic moral vagrancy that defines so much of modern Arab culture.

The capital assets of civilisation that history has always denominated in the currency of urbanism should be very important to the Arab people today as we seek to replace political cultures of violence and exclusion with more sensible cultures of tolerance, participation and greater intellectual and material productivity. We do not need to go very far afield to find pointers towards the elements of our political redemption and our national salvation. Those pointers are within us and amongst us in great ancient citadels of urban civilisation such as Damascus and Cairo, in the tens of thousands of small villages and towns that dot the entire Arab World, and in persistent attempts such as ours in Jordan to liberalise and modernise our new political systems that are based on old cultural identities.

This was my conclusion at the end of my search for the perfect pair of Arab cotton socks. I was offered many fake substitutes — cheap, false gods of the thread, I thought — including polyester-cotton mixtures from the Far East and assorted high-tech pretenders from the industrialised North. Neither my spirit nor my feet would have any of them, though, and held out for pure cotton socks made in Cairo and Damascus. I found them in the end, as I knew I would, deep in the heart of the two cities. They were displayed with a brand of elegance and even pride that I did not detect among the sellers of imported juice-squeezers, foam sandals and cheap plastic toys who now dominate Arab markets, or among the ubiquitous uniformed and plain-clothed men who carry guns and who stalk every corner of the modern lands of the Arabs.

I paid my money and took my cotton socks and I walked away smiling and pleased, perhaps because I had verified something real about the Arab past, perhaps because I knew something good about the Arab future.

Israel obviously having second thoughts about deals with Palestinians

By Pascal B. Karmy

ISRAEL HAS not been honouring its commitments under the Oslo accord. Any person who has been observing the stream of negotiations, agreements and understandings reached between Israel and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) may come out with the impression that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres are having second thoughts or regrets about including the West Bank in the Oslo accord and would have preferred to restrict the accord to the Gaza Strip. An observer would also note that the Israeli delegations are interpreting the provisions of the Oslo accord quite restrictively with a view to curtailing the rights of the Palestinians in the West Bank or to reduce them to the minimum so as to protect Israel's interests and particularly those of the settlers.

In consequence of Israeli policy, the West Bank has been mutilated or truncated by leaving parcels of it to the Palestinians and keeping the lion's share to Israel. This was done in the past by expropriations or confiscations of Palestinian land to build settlements. Presently it is done by constructing roads through and around Palestinian towns under the pretext of protecting the Jewish settlements. That not only obstructs the peace process but also constitute a flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, to which Israel is a party, and numerous relevant United Nations resolutions passed against Israel's actions since its occupation of Palestinian territories in 1967.

It seems clear to any impartial observer that the Israeli government is trying to create a sort of Palestinian "bantustans" (as was envisioned by the demised apartheid South African rulers in South Africa for the blacks there) or separate small cantons severed from each other so as to prevent Palestinians from forming one compact unit of the West Bank and ultimately a Palestinian state with Gaza Strip. This division of the West Bank contradicts Article IV of the Oslo accord, which "views the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a single territorial unit whose integrity will be

preserved during the interim period."

If both these territories should be viewed as a single territorial unit, one of its components, the West Bank, should be maintained as a compact territorial unit in which about one-and-a-half million Palestinians live. Indeed, Ramallah, East Jerusalem, Nablus, Jenin, Hebron, Bethlehem and other Palestinian towns and villages are of the same importance to Palestinians.

The redeployment of Israeli military forces has been long overdue. Under Article XIII of the Oslo accord redeployment of the Israeli army should take place "not later than the eve of the elections for the Palestine Council." However, reached PLO-Israeli reach an agreement covering the redeployment of Israeli military forces. Under this agreement, there will be a complete redeployment of Israeli forces in the rural zones (called Area B) while the Palestine police will assume responsibility for public order for Palestinians. But Israel will have overriding responsibility for security and for protecting Israelis.

Further redeployments will be implemented in three intervals every six months, after the inauguration of the Palestine Council. However Area C (which is the biggest part of the West Bank) covers settlements and other sites that will remain under Israeli control, while civil powers and responsibilities will be gradually transferred to Palestinian jurisdiction. The agreement lays down general principles and therefore most of its items or sections require further negotiations and further agreements. It seems that the chain of agreements between Israel and the Palestinians will never end, simply because the agreements are not precise, clear, concrete and specifically detailed.

The question of the Palestine Council has not so far been resolved. The negotiations have been turning in a vicious circle. No agreement has been reached on the number of council members and Israel is refusing to allow Palestinians of Jerusalem to run in the elections. Israel's stand on this matter contradicts Annex I of the Oslo accord, which stipulates that:

"Palestinians of Jerusalem who live there will have the right to participate in the election process." This provision confers upon the Palestinians of Jerusalem the right to elect and be elected as well. The word "election" means "electing or being elected," according to the Oxford and Westminster dictionaries.

Another important problem which calls for concrete resolution is the question of water. The Israelis have initially argued that the Palestinians in the West Bank have no right to the underground water resources and that they should accept the consumption of only a part of the water, the biggest share being allotted to the settlements. Now, apparently, Israel has conceded that the Palestinians have a right to the underground water. But the mechanism of implementing this right has been postponed. It should be remembered that Annex III of the Oslo accord provided that a water development programme should be prepared by experts from both sides and that both should cooperate in the management of water resources in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and that

cooperation will include proposals for studies and plans on water rights of each party as well as on equitable utilisation of joint water resources for implementation in and beyond the interim period.

Moreover, quite apart from the Oslo accord, Palestinians have been living in the West Bank and Gaza for centuries and thus have a superior right to the underground water resources than the newcomers, the Jewish settlers, whose settlements on occupied territories are "ab initio" illegal under international law.

I believe that PNA leader Yasser Arafat is conceding too much in accepting certain conditions in negotiations with Mr. Peres, especially those which are not in conformity with the Oslo accord provisions.

The last redeployment of the Israeli army will be completed by February or July 1997, according to the Taba agreement. Hopefully, it will be honoured by Israel. But one wonders what will happen if the Likud Party wins the Israeli elections to the Knesset in 1996 and a new Israeli government is formed in 1997.

LETTERS

Facts distorted

To the Editor:

I WAS amazed at an Aug. 25 report by the Israeli daily, Ma'ariv, which claimed that three Israeli officials met in Geneva in late June with Syrian and Lebanese officials.

The report, quoting Avraham Katz Oz, a former minister of agriculture who heads Israel's delegation to the Water Resources Working Group of the Multilateral Peace Talks, claimed that the Syrian delegate to the negotiations was a retired minister of planning, and named both the supposedly retired minister, and the "head" of the Lebanese "delegation." The report spoke of extremely important documents that the Syrians and the Lebanese delegates brought with them, saying that these documents were translated in Damascus and that the Norwegians paid for it!

The report finally described the meeting as a "breakthrough!" I cannot imagine that Mr. Katz Oz could possibly distort what happened in the Geneva meeting. The fact of the matter is that we all attended an international meeting called for by a United Nations Agency, UNDP, to discuss issues of water pollution and the role of legislation in preventing it. Attendees were experts from Palestine, Jordan, the United Kingdom, the United Nations, Norway, Israel and one private sector expert, who happened to be Syrian, and another Lebanese. Each was there in his private capacity, not representing his government. Neither of the two holds any government position nor has any of them occupied a government position in the past. The Syrian expert has had a long and successful career with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), but has never been a minister as the article claimed. He now has his own con-

sulting office in Aleppo. The Lebanese participant is a university professor.

Also, the meeting was not conducted in a Geneva hotel under tight secrecy as the article claimed. Rather, the two meetings took place in an office of a U.N. mission. The Syrian and the Lebanese experts are old acquaintances, and I felt odd when I could talk to Israelis while the two experts shunned away all Israeli attempts to get close to them. They never exchanged jokes with the Israelis and the jokes they laughed at were not those told by the Israelis either. The Syrian and Lebanese experts conducted themselves like any expert would in a United Nations meeting.

The report did not speak of the other experts from the other countries to investigate that the meeting was between Israelis and Syrians. To add to the story of suspense, the report spoke about an accidental appearance in the hotel of members of the U.S. delegation which heads the multilateral talks on water resources, and supposedly asked the Israelis "what are you doing here?"

Actually, the U.S. delegation, which stayed at the same hotel, was the trade delegation that was negotiating with its Japanese counterpart on the famous agreement between their two countries. An American known to us was at the same hotel, and he was only an expert on the U.S. water delegation to the multilaterals. He is a technical person who works for the U.S. Corps of Engineers. I sat with him one day and he knew all about the U.N. meeting we were attending.

The report claimed that these meetings were kept secret. This is not true. The Israel Radio reported the meetings early July, and I commented on their report almost immediately after that.

The report quoted Mr. Katz Oz as saying that the Israelis obtained extremely important papers from the Syrian and the Lebanese delegates. Actually, the papers each of experts presented contained no more information than any Syrian and Lebanese paper contained. Such papers were repeatedly presented at international and regional seminars. I say this because I am familiar with the Syrian and Lebanese data; they are no secret, and any expert in the field can obtain them by looking up Syrian and Lebanese papers presented in Damascus, Amman, Cairo, the Arab League, Kuwait, UNDP seminars and elsewhere. I am actually surprised that the Israelis have not had them on file for a long time.

My comments are not meant to defend Syria. Nor am I their spokesman. The comments are nonetheless meant to defend an effort that I started when I headed the Jordanian delegation to the multilateral talks, an effort that aimed at pooling the expertise in the region and the advanced countries to help find collective answers to the many challenges facing us regarding water resources in the Middle East.

I believe the motive of the distortion of the proceedings and objectives of this international U.N. seminar is political. I further regret that professional meetings of experts representing only themselves are used for political fantasies through inaccurate press reporting. I do not believe such manoeuvres on the part of the Israeli press serves the cause of comprehensive peace that we all seek.

Dr. Munther J. Haddadin,
Amman.

Features

Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia swap diplomatic signals

ADDIS ABABA (Agencies) — Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt engaged in a flurry of diplomatic activity on Monday over a failed assassination attempt against Egyptian leader Hosni Mubarak.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa met Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in Addis Ababa and officials said talks concerned investigations into who was behind the plot to kill Mr. Mubarak in the Ethiopian capital on June 26.

Mr. Mubarak said on Sunday his country was preparing to take unspecified measures against Sudan over the attempt to kill him.

"Foreign Minister Amr Musa will hold a meeting with the Ethiopian president, and on the basis of the information we will have from Ethiopia, we are going to take some measures (against Sudan)," Mr. Mubarak said.

Mr. Meles, Ethiopia's former president, was elected prime minister of a federated state last month.

For its part, Sudan says it wants talks with Ethiopia over allegations that it gave sanctuary to three Egyptian fugitives said to have been involved in the attack on Mr.

Mubarak's motorcade. Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al Bashir said he would send a delegation to Addis Ababa to discuss the allegations — which Sudan was denied.

In remarks broadcast on television late on Sunday, Lieutenant-General Bashir said he regretted Ethiopian measures taken against his country, including closing a Sudanese consulate and cutting its diplomatic presence in Khartoum.

Gen. Bashir said he regretted the moves and promised to send a delegation to Ethiopia to present the results of the search. Egypt's foreign minister warned the Sudanese to act quickly.

"Any attempt to win time will be refused because it is a dangerous issue," Mr. Musa said after returning from Ethiopia on Monday. "There is no joke in an attack on a president and we will not accept any sort of hedging."

Ethiopia identified one of the Egyptian gunmen as Hussein Ahmad Shahit-Ali, also known as Siraj Mohammed. He apparently carried forged Sudanese and Ethiopian passports.

The two other men were identified as Mustafa Hamza and Izzat Yassin, both believed to be Egyptians.

Sudan dismisses the charges, saying only one Egyptian entered its territory and that he subsequently disappeared. Mr. Mubarak escaped the attack unhurt, and later implicated Sudan in the incident. Egypt has repeatedly accused Sudan of harbouring and training militants trying to topple the Cairo government and impose a purist Islamic state by force.

Meanwhile Ethiopia said it had arrested people suspected of willing two Sudanese aid officials in Addis Ababa.

A Foreign Ministry statement on Sunday said investigations were continuing but that the two murder victims were known to have had disputes with individuals whom they had sacked. It gave no further details of the arrests.

Dr. Abdullah Al Gaali, head of the international Islamic Relief Agency, and Mohammed Al Fathi Yousi, a teacher at the Awlila Islamic School and a member of the World Islamic League, were shot dead outside their residence on Saturday.

Jordan seeks to host MENAFIO

(Continued from page 1)

there are already local, regional and international agencies, including the World Bank and its affiliates, to finance projects and the proposed bank would not serve any particular purpose.

The four "core" parties in the Middle East peace process — Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians — plus the U.S., Japan and several other countries supported the idea of MENAFIO being the predetermined forerunner of the bank.

But the Europeans wanted MENAFIO to be instituted as an experimental body whose track record during the first two years should decide whether it could be turned into a development bank.

The issue is expected to

be decided during the next two meetings of the task force, in Rome in mid-September and in Washington in October, diplomatic sources said.

The Jordanian desire to host MENAFIO appears to reflect the fact that the body would be central to identifying projects for financing, including bilateral and multi-lateral grants and technical aid.

"We insist that the project identification process is done in Jordan," said the official. "Other aspects of the projects, including assessment etc. could be done elsewhere."

Meanwhile, Jordanian officials maintained in public that there had been no final decision that the proposed bank would be based in Cairo.

Addressing a prepara-

tory meeting on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit to be held in Amman in October, Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb said he had no official confirmation of the reports.

"As far as we know, no official decision has been taken over this issue," said the minister, adding that establishment of the bank would be announced at the MENA summit.

Omayya Touqan, director-general of the Amman Financial Market and one of the key figures involved in preparing for the MENA summit, said: "If we are interested in hosting the bank, then we will pursue our objective through all means available to us."

Dr. Touqan avoided answering whether Jordan was indeed interested in hosting the bank.

and biological weapons programme, also said he "certainly sees no lifting of the sanctions in the foreseeable future."

Mr. Ekeus, who briefed the German minister on his recent visits to Iraq and Jordan, said that he outlined to him "the seriousness of the situation" following the latest revelations.

In Amman, the head of the U.N. special commission met with Gen. Kamel who was responsible for military programmes before his defection to Jordan.

Mr. Ekeus said the U.N. mission had become "seriously concerned" in recent days about Iraqi biological weapons.

Iraq claimed to have destroyed these, but that had to be verified, Ekeus said. "Baghdad has the chemical components to build new biological weapons," he also stressed.

Regarding the present situation in Iraq following the defections, Mr. Ekeus said that in the civil administration "things are upside down."

Mr. Ekeus spoke out in favour of continued German military participation in the U.N. inspection mission for Iraq, and he called on the Iraqi government to cooperate fully with Mr. Ekeus and his team.

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Dr. Ghali's speech was read by Under Secretary-General Ismat Kitani after the U.N. chief came down with a high fever.

Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto mounted a defence on Islam, urging the world not to view it as a religion that denigrated women.

"Islam forbids injustice," Ms. Bhutto said. "As a Muslim woman I feel a special responsibility to counter the propaganda of a handful, that Islam gives woman a second-class status."

She stressed the importance of distinguishing between Islamic teachings and social taboos spun by the traditions of a patriarchal society.

Meanwhile, U.S. delegates said China had somewhat eased intrusive security at the NGO forum at Huairou, 30 kilometres northwest of here, but they urged the U.N. to take a firm line.

The factors behind Hamas' suicide bombings

By Beverly Milton-Edwards

THE IDENTITY of the perpetrators of the suicide bombing in Ramat Gan on July 24, in which six Israelis and the bomber were killed, remains unsolved. But Hamas admitted responsibility for the attack in East Jerusalem Aug. 21 in which five were killed and over 100 wounded. These attacks are a further sign of the spiral of political violence currently characterising both radical Palestinian and Israeli opposition to the peace process.

By donkey, bicycle, bus or on foot, the phenomenon of Palestinian suicide bombers has scarred the political landscape of the post-Oslo era in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Israel. The nature of these assaults against Israelis has heightened current Israeli concerns with their security. This factor plays into the hands of all who oppose the peace process and makes the task of negotiating it all the more difficult.

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civilians can be pinpointed to changes in the political environment. In particular, the current strategy of suicide assaults must be put in the context of the fact that they resort to this kind of violence against Israelis has been (in part, at least) triggered by a response to Israel's blatant disregard for Palestinian life as exhibited so poignantly during the Hebron massacre and as aftermath in February 1994.

The Hebron massacre factor

The import of the Hebron factor in deciphering the current thinking and strategy of Hamas' Izz Al Din Al Qassam brigades cannot be overestimated. When the settler Baruch Goldstein massacred 29 unarmed Palestinian worshippers as they knelt at prayer, he triggered a response within sectors of the Islamist community which impels to seek revenge as a religious rather than strategic politically motivated imperative. An act of massacre was perpetrated by an Israeli citizen who was subsequently lauded by significant sectors of the Israeli population at large. If Goldstein's act was an act of Jewish rage against the Arabs of Palestine, then it should have come as no surprise that, following the massacre, Hamas announced it would be avenged.

A religious conviction that the death of innocents should be avenged, facilitated by the technical expertise of figures like the now infamous Yahya Ayyash (popularly known as the Engineer) motivated elements within Hamas to adopt the tactic of suicide bombing. A group of young people without security records were recruited with the specific aim of embarking on suicide missions in Israel in the name of Islam and the liberation of Palestine. The religious passion with which these young unknowns have embraced their task is evident in the words of the man responsible for the Hadera bus bombing of April 1994, in which five Israelis were killed. In his will, the bomber, Ammar Armana, declared: "The world is a paradise for

infidels but a prison for believers." He ended by exhorting fellow Muslims to "follow the path of martyrdom". Armana, and the other young Palestinians who have subsequently undertaken suicide missions, subscribe to a philosophy currently prevalent in certain wings of Hamas that has elevated the act of jihad in the aftermath of Goldstein's Jewish equivalent. The Hebron factor has succeeded in increasing the climate of violence and hostilities while the protagonists of the peace process struggle to come to terms with political timetables and agreements.

The elevation of the act of jihad, from inner striving of the self through a wider call to liberation, to the formation of vanguards prepared to undertake attacks in which the sacrifice of life is essential, has a number of short-term political implications for the entire Palestinian Islamist movement.

First, as a strategy to communicate a political agenda it should alert observers to the current depths of isolation and alienation in the movement from the peace process. The strategy of jihad through suicide bombing is not just about publicising the Islamic call, it is also about the way in which the Oslo and Cairo agreements have failed to take account of a sizeable minority of the Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It is also about the failure of Israeli and Palestinian politicians to take seriously into account the political aspirations of the Islamists and their vision for peace. While it is true that other elements within Hamas, namely the so-called moderate leadership, have been involved in a dialogue with Palestinian nationalist leaders, thus far this level of communication has yielded nothing politically significant for the Islamists. The recent formation of a pro-peace movement, Al-Masdar, by former Hamas members, which is partly funded by the PNA, is the only indication that political Islam is being given a pro-peace platform. Nevertheless, at present a number of the Hamas and Islamic

Jihad leaders remain behind bars either in Israeli or Palestinian jails. The bombings have elicited a security crack-down against the political leadership of Hamas while still failing to apprehend significant numbers of the Izz Al Din Al Qassam brigades to stop further assaults.

The failure of the nationalist leadership

The suicide attacks have won a degree of popular support from the Palestinian community. In particular, the initial bombings, in the wake of Hebron and carried out in the name of Goldstein's victims, received widespread backing, as well as endorsement from Hamas' political leadership. The attacks of 1995 have been received less warmly within the Palestinian community and the political luminaries of Hamas have distanced themselves from such actions.

While the propaganda distributed by Hamas after these incidents would condemn the peace-makers, it must be recognised that the motive for attack is revenge — against Goldstein and his Israeli supporters and the Israeli army or Shin Bet undercover units for assassinating Islamic leaders, also revenge against the failure of the Palestinian nationalist leadership. Revenge became a very powerful motive in the ranks of Izz Al Din Al Qassam brigades. It took on a religious and political significance encompassing a rage and powerlessness of many Palestinians symbolised by the desperate suicide bomber. Revenge for political and religious acts of destruction by men of one faith encouraged the Islamists to test the limits of their military capabilities. The bombers were motivated by a belief in the sanctity of their act. Their source was the Holy Koran, which exhorts Muslims to "fight in the way of God, those who fight with you... And slay them wherever you come upon them, and expel them from where they expelled you." Jihad, in this context is an act of defence, the suicide bombings are a retaliation against aggres-

sion. The theological dimension

It must be remembered that the decision to undertake the bombing campaigns has not been taken lightly; the Qassam units have possessed the expertise and materials to produce bombs for quite some time. The leadership of all wings will have been well aware of the consequences of just such a campaign against Israel. The theological dimension, however, will have prevailed upon those doubting such a tactic. A widely accepted interpretation of Islam places the current status of the Muslims of Palestine in a situation which compels them, in the name of their faith, to repel occupation. Suras of the Holy Koran make these obligations very clear; if Muslim lands are occupied the invaders must be evicted, if Muslims are forced to live under the political rule of those of another faith this situation must be reversed, if enemies carry out aggressive actions against unarmed Muslims they must be stopped. Given these circumstances, irrespective of the religious faith of the enemy, it is the obligation of all Muslims to defend themselves and wage jihad. Jihad, under this context, is no more than a just war, a war of defence sanctioned in the Christian and Jewish faiths. Thus, no matter how unpalatable this perspective is to those who oppose the Islamist movement, this is the manner in which they perceive their task.

The current wave of suicide bombing is unlikely to endure. Joint Israeli and Palestinian efforts to apprehend the bombers, a lack of popular support from the Palestinian community and further changes in the political environment of the West Bank and Gaza Strip do not bode well for the proponents of this approach. The political leadership of Hamas, with its pragmatic approach, is likely to prevail over the militarists as the barometer of support changes with the political climate once again.

Middle East International

Russia torn between frantic change and habitual caution

By David Ljunggren-Reuters

MOSCOW — The sight of a little girl in a Western nappy running gleefully around the room hardly seemed revolutionary, but the infant's father knew otherwise.

"You cannot realise just what this means to us," he said. "The first generation of Russian children raised on disposable diapers. It's mind-blowing."

When my Moscow assignment started in 1990, the first small Western stores had just started to sell basic foods and household implements. Ordinary Russians, foraging through state shops for scraps, could only stare and dream.

The reverie turned into reality with shocking suddenness after a failed hard-line coup in 1991 blew apart the Soviet Union and ushered in a new reform-minded Russian government.

Today Moscow is awash with money as those cunning enough to obtain hard cash hasten to explore capitalism, while they can.

If the first five years of perestroika revolved mainly around politics, the second five have been all about money. How to get it, spend it and flaunt it. Where to go. What to do.

Ridiculously expensive restaurants open every week. Domestic airlines offer business class. Luxury Italian sports car makers Ferrari and Lamborghini are pushing their latest models here.

Westerners who cherished long philosophical chats around the kitchen table with their Russian friends now sit in bemused silence as the conversation swirls around the merits of BMW versus Mercedes and whether Paris is more exciting than London.

"I am just so bored by New York. I've been there four or five times in the last year and it has nothing to offer," the 22-year-old sister of an acquaintance announced the other day.

The pace is frantic, for inbuilt deep in the Russian psyche is the conviction that all good things come to an end, usually sooner rather than later.

The overriding stimulus seems to be: "What can I get out of this before everything falls apart?"

The old certainties have gone, polarising society into the few with talent to make money and the many impoverished millions still stunned by the end of communism. Trust has become a currency of the past — dollars are much more preferable.

Whatever the long-term implications, the effect in the short term is striking. The small shabby kiosks so prevalent in the early days of economic reform have been largely eclipsed by hundreds of flashy Western-style stores and supermarkets.

In 1990 this was a dirty, grey, ramshackle and deeply unappealing city. Only after years of careful restoration and rebuilding has it gradually become clear that Moscow is far more beautiful than anyone ever gave it credit for.

But beneath the new veneer of Western-style civilisation lurks the real Russia, wary of change, suspicious of foreigners and in many ways still as unfathomable as ever.

Logic is hard to discern in a land where restaurants close for lunch and where learner drivers must undergo a psychiatric test to officially prove they are sane but are then allowed to behave like gibbering lunatics behind the wheel.

Ask why this should be and the answer invariably comes back: "Ladno, byvae" or "well, that's just the way things are."

The "ladno, byvae" approach works wonders when the need to improvise is paramount, but it does

little for long-term reform.

This is especially evident in the "Blubinka," the gigantic expanse stretching eastwards from Moscow and St. Petersburg, where many say bitterly that reform was a sham from the start and complain they have been effectively disenfranchised.

The interest in Western-style politics faded fast as people realised that although democracy gives you the right to say what you want, it does not mean others have to listen.

The Clubinka is where the battle for Russia could well be decided in the long term, because the many millions who feel less liberated and more helpless than they did in 1991 represent a mighty millstone around the neck of future reforms.

"What's all this about freedom and democracy?" asked a local government official in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk.

"If someone really abused their powers in the old days, we could always appeal to the local Communist Party organisation, or failing that, to our trade union. Now we have no one to turn to. We are totally defenceless," he said.

Just as vulnerable are those fleeing the wars which flared up as the Soviet

empire collapsed, pushing the names of obscure enclaves, regions and republics into the headlines.

Nagorno-Karabakh, south Ossetia, North Ingushetia, Mingrelia, Abkhazia, Chechnya, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan — a litany of senseless conflicts and thousands of deaths which furnished the darkest memories of the last five years.

However, desperate the scenario, there is a strangely effective palliative which can bring a smile from the most unlikely situations — the delightfully morbid sense of humour which still thrives across the former communist superpower.

One night in January 1991, hours after Soviet commandos had killed five people in an attack on the Latvian interior ministry in Riga, I walked through puddles of blood, glass, masonry and cartridge cases up to the front of the shattered building.

"This is a tragedy," said the sole guard standing outside.

"Yes, it is," I agreed, looking around "the devastation."

"A real tragedy," he said. "They'd only just restored this place and now they're going to have to start all over again."

Women conference begins

(Continued from page 1)

hold us accountable. They will look for concrete signs that Beijing, in 1995, was followed by real action."

Dr. Ghali took aim at countries, which he did not name, balking at granting equality for women, by denying them the same access as men to economic, social and political power.

"Equality before the law is being achieved in many countries," the U.N. secretary-general said.

"But equality in fact remains an elusive goal in all countries. Equality of dignity is far from being achieved, with discrimination on the basis of gender still widespread."

"Real and concrete steps are still required, to ensure equality of opportunity in education, and equality of access to health system, to jobs and to political power."

Dr. Ghali's words drove at

the heart of a conflict, diplomats said, that could turn the once-a-decade forum into the same battleground that engulfed previous U.N. conferences on population and poverty.

The 4,000 delegates from 181 states are to devise a blueprint on women's problems ranging from fertility control and legal rights to education and health.

But liberals, led by the United States and Scandinavia, have been opposed by a loose alliance of eight or nine conservatives, ranging from the Vatican to Iran and other Muslim states.

The squabble is chiefly over wordings on fertility control and abortions, but also over the union of "equality," contested by some Muslims as incompatible with Islamic law.

Women activists fear that if the discord is not resolved, a fudgy or conservative text

would erode two decades of gains.

Dr. Ghali's speech was read by Under Secretary-General Ismat Kitani after the U.N. chief came down with a high fever.

Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto mounted a defence on Islam, urging the world not to view it as a religion that denigrated women.

"Islam forbids injustice," Ms. Bhutto said. "As a Muslim woman I feel a special responsibility to counter the propaganda of a handful, that Islam gives woman a second-class status."

She stressed the importance of distinguishing between Islamic teachings and social taboos spun by the traditions of a patriarchal society.

Meanwhile, U.S. delegates said China had somewhat eased intrusive security at the NGO forum at Huairou, 30 kilometres northwest of here, but they urged the U.N. to take a firm line.

Taliban victories shock Kabul

KABUL (AFP) — Afghan presidential armed forces have been reshuffled following strategic victories by the Taliban Islamic student militia in western Afghanistan, official sources said Monday.

Abdul Hafiz Mansoor, head of the state-run Bakhtar Information Agency, said a military commission had been set up to reorganise the defence of the western province of Herat and retake the Shindand air base.

The Taliban captured the

Shindand base, 80 kilometres south of Herat city, early Sunday dealing a major blow to the forces of Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, who were under the command of provincial governor Ismael Khan.

"There are evident signs that the state forces evacuated Shindand without any fighting," Mr. Mansoor admitted frankly.

Mr. Mansoor said the new frontline was now some 30 kilometres north of Shindand, the country's second

largest airbase, at Adrasikan.

Most of the pro-Rabbani MiG-21 fighters and SU-22 bombers, which provided air cover for all ground operations in western Afghan provinces, were said to have been evacuated from Shindand to Herat or Kabul before the defeat.

But large-scale infantry reinforcements have been airlifted from Mr. Rabbani's Bagram military airbase, north of Kabul, in Herat in recent days.

Heavy fighting is expected

in Herat province as the Taliban have vowed to take the capital, whereas pro-Rabbani forces are preparing for a counter-attack.

Ismael Khan will head the new commission which will also include General Allaudin Khan, commander of the 17th Infantry Division based in Herat, Sediq Chakkari, acting minister of frontiers affairs, and Mr. Abdullah, official Defence Ministry spokesman, said Mr. Mansoor.

It appears Allaudin Khan's status has been elevated over the other commission members. Mr. Mansoor said

Allaudin Khan now has a degree of autonomy to operate outside the authority of the new military commission.

"Allaudin Khan has been empowered by the central state to arm fighters, to launch military expeditions, and to independently withdraw money from the central bank," stated Mr. Mansoor.

This implies that Ismael Khan will no longer enjoy the complete autonomy that he has had as governor.

"In the past Ismael Khan never shared any authority with local commanders," Mr. Mansoor said.

Saudi coffers saddled with growing public services

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Saudi Arabia plans to carry out sweeping reforms and cut subsidies to restore balance to its budget but it faces an increasing bill of services to its fast-growing population, experts said Monday.

Although the world's leading oil producer and exporter has decided to hike fees on telephone, electricity and aviation, its commitment to providing free education, health and water to its people will unlikely be affected.

"Services to citizens constitute a major burden on the budget but I don't think they will be affected by spending cuts," said Henry Azzam, chief economist at the Saudi National Commercial Bank.

Allocations for health, education, water, communication and social services stood at around 55 billion Saudi riyals (\$14.6 billion) in 1995, accounting for more than one third of the \$40 billion budget. Another 10 billion riyals (\$2.6 billion) were earmarked for social aid.

The figure is far higher than a decade ago as the population was around two thirds of the current population of nearly 18 million.

Experts said the value of services would steadily rise in the coming years as the Saudi population is growing by between three and four per cent annually because the government is encouraging natives to have more children.

They expected the govern-

ment to rationalise such services by making them more efficient but they ruled out any major cuts in such allocations.

They referred to the sixth development plan, which would focus on upgrading services to the citizens apart from development of the non-oil sector.

The 1995-1999 plan stated that one of the government's strategic goals would be to develop the Saudi society, provide it with social and health and allow it to effectively contribute to development programmes, the experts said.

"The state coffers could receive less funds in the future due to the drop in oil prices at a time when financing social services for the citizens depends mainly on the oil income, which accounts for more than two thirds of the total revenues," said Ihsan Abu Huleika, an expert at the Doha-based Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consulting (GOIC).

"The question is: How can we maintain the level and quality of such services? The answer could be through increasing non-oil earnings, encouraging the private sector to play a greater role, upgrading the efficiency of social programmes and encouraging the cooperative societies and other commercial and charity organisations to set up economic and social projects," he pointed out.

Apart from services, Saudi

Arabia is also burdened by high spending on weapons as part of plans to bolster its army following the Gulf war.

Such commitments have combined with a decline in oil prices to create a large deficit in its budget, peaking at around \$33.6 billion in 1991 before easing to nearly \$10.6 billion in 1994. The shortfall was slashed to around \$4 billion in 1995 after the kingdom trimmed expenditure.

The sixth development plan, details of which were released two months ago, forecast spending of an average \$40 billion a year, one of lowest expenditure levels in Saudi history.

But the plan includes other unique features as it focuses on privatisation, attracting investment, and increasing non-oil revenues.

Privatisation plans, announced by King Fahd last year, cover airport services and the national airlines, water and electricity and other sectors. These would be coupled with cutting subsidies.

Another major burden on the Saudi budget, but the government has ruled out imposing income taxes after such a move triggered mass resignations eight years ago.

"Contribution by the private sector to social services has become necessary. The government should now determine the extent of such a contribution to ensure such services remain intact," Mr. Abu Huleika said.

Businessmen urge APEC to speed up world trade rules

NEWPORT BEACH, California (R) — Business leaders from the United States, Japan and 16 other Pacific Rim nations urged APEC leaders to speed up and expand the liberalisation of world trade rules established last year under the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

In a report that will be forwarded to leaders of the 18-Nation Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the business executives said hastening implementation of the GATT Uruguay Round commitments is a key component aimed at creating the world's largest free-trade bloc by the year 2020.

Their proposals are to be presented as a starting point, for high level talks set for November in Osaka, Japan.

Leading executives of large and small companies from the member countries reached agreement on the recommendations Saturday as they wrapped up their third and final meeting this year in advance of the APEC summit. The meeting of APEC's Pacific Business Forum opened Friday in Los Angeles.

Members of the Pacific Business Forum said all the measures contained in the report were agreed to by consensus. And they stressed that the report focused on

proposed reforms that they believed would achieve immediate, tangible results.

However, a number of the recommendations appear likely to face difficulty in winning acceptance from APEC leaders.

Sandra Kristoff, the U.S. ambassador to APEC, said in August that the United States could not offer to accelerate measures under the GATT Uruguay Round, as it already has met its commitments and the Clinton administration has limited statutory authority to go further.

The business leaders acknowledged they did not consider "political" obstacles.

"We just laid out what we thought should happen," said Les McCraw, the chairman and chief executive officer of Fluor Corp. and the U.S. co-chairman of the meeting.

After their last summit in Bogor, Indonesia, last November, APEC leaders pledged to achieve free trade and investment in the region by 2020. The Pacific Business Forum was charged with devising a plan for the APEC leaders to consider when they meet again in Osaka in November.

The report also urges APEC governments to:

- Simplify procedures for obtaining business residency visas by 1996 and to introduce visa-free business travel throughout the APEC region by 1999.

- Ease and harmonise custom clearance procedures by 2000.

- Harmonise national product standards by 1999.
- Increase cooperation in safeguarding intellectual property rights by 2000.

- Establish a private-government task force to identify infrastructure needs in the region and develop investment guidelines by 1996.

In addition to a specific set of time limits urged for each measure recommended in the report, the business leaders called for a review system with "markers" to measure success in carrying out their plan.

U.S. government changing how it measures growth, productivity

WASHINGTON (AP) — As if Americans didn't have enough to worry about with stagnant wages and uncertain job prospects, now the government is preparing a revision of economic history that will show the current recovery was even weaker than previously thought.

The effort is part of a massive overhaul of the government's primary measure of the economy — the gross domestic product (GDP). All of this will have a profound effect on our understanding of such critical pocketbook issues as U.S. productivity growth and gains in American living standards.

Starting in December, the government will move the old GDP measurement into the background and replace it with a new process for totting up the value of all the goods and services produced each year in a \$7 trillion economy.

The Commerce Department, which is doing the work, has already given a preview of the changes. Under the old GDP measurement, the economy slowed in the April-June quarter to an annual growth rate of 0.5 per cent.

The new GDP measurement, however, erased even that little bit of growth and showed the economy contracted at a rate of 0.2 per cent. If that slump continues in the current July-September quarter, it would meet the classic definition of a recession.

While most economists believe the economy is rebounding, the new GDP measure will show that growth at a weaker rate — probably about one-half percentage point lower than the old measurement.

Although the new figures provide a better explanation of why Americans feel their standard of living is stagnating, it doesn't alter the

amount of money going into their pockets.

"We haven't changed reality. All we have changed is the numbers we put down on paper," said David Wyss, economist at Dri-McGraw Hill Inc. "The economy didn't change just because we are counting it differently."

So far in this recovery, which began in March 1991, the economy has been expanding at a puny annual rate of 2.6 per cent, instead of the 3.1 per cent average previously believed. Under either figure, this is shaping up to be the weakest upturn in the post-World War II period.

By contrast, the revised GDP measurement makes the period before 1987 look more robust, boosting average growth by about one-half percentage point.

While the average American may not pay attention to year-to-year changes in the GDP, these revisions will have a profound impact on other measurements that do strike closer to home. One of these is productivity.

For U.S. living standards to increase, it takes steady gains in productivity, the amount of production obtained per hour of work.

But with less output, according to the GDP measurement, productivity will look weaker as well.

Under the old figures, productivity appeared to be rising by two per cent a year in this recovery, compared to one per cent annually since 1973. But the revisions will show productivity rising by 1.3 per cent a year in the 1970s and 1980s, compared to 1.4 per cent in this upturn, a negligible difference.

By wiping out the previous pickup in productivity, the measurement dashes one of the hopes of the Clinton administration — that the

economy was finally breaking out of the stagnant productivity period from 1973 to 1990.

Tiny increases in productivity are the reason wage gains have been depressed since 1973 and Americans' standard of living looks so anemic when compared to the boom years of the 1950s and 1960s.

One might wonder why the Clinton administration, already facing a tough reelection campaign, would produce a statistical revision that is going to weaken its boasting rights about the economy.

Commerce Department economists say they are simply trying to correct a long-standing problem with the GDP measurement. Lewis Alexander, the department's chief economist and a Clinton appointee, said he has gotten nothing but support from others in the administration.

"This is the right thing to do. The new numbers are clearly better," he said.

The problem being addressed is the use of a base year, currently 1987, to establish fixed values for the various components of output in computing the inflation-adjusted GDP figures.

That system works reasonably well as long as the prices of all goods are generally rising at the same rate.

But it was thrown out of sync, first in the 1970s because of the huge run-up in energy prices, and more recently with the sharp drop in computer prices. Commerce analysts estimate that computers account for 60 per cent of the overstatement of GDP in the current recovery.

To fix the problem, Commerce is junking the fixed base year and switching to a rolling average, called it a "chain-weighted" measurement.

Zedillo offers Mexicans gradual recovery

MEXICO CITY (R) — President Zedillo has pleased investors with a promise of prudent and gradual recovery in his first state of the nation speech, but he offered little to cheer the heart of the average Mexican struggling to cope with a crippling economic slowdown.

Mr. Zedillo's pledge to reduce the powers of his office in the name of greater democracy also won praise, but political analysts said the light at the end of the tunnel — the president tried to offer his countrymen still looked a long way off.

"In the macro (economy), which is what matters to the big investors, there will be no fundamental change... he gave no sign that that will change," said historian and political commentator Lorenzo Meyer.

But he added: "The common Mexican, the family, the

worker, was promised that the recovery may begin, but under the same old rules, which have not been very positive for them."

Conscious of Mexico's dire economic plight following a bungled devaluation last December, Mr. Zedillo made the speech a sober, austere occasion stripped of the pomp and open-air motorcades of previous years.

There were no reports of street disturbances, and even the leftist Democratic Revolution Party was muted in its protests in congress, where members only held up placards as Mr. Zedillo spoke, parodying his campaign slogans.

"Unemployment, rising prices, hunger, violence: Is that well-being for all the family?" one placard asked.

Mr. Zedillo predicted that the economy, which has shed more than a million jobs

since the December peso crash and shrunk by a staggering 10.5 per cent in the second quarter of this year, would start to grow again soon.

"We have surmounted the worst of the crisis and the coming years will be times of economic growth and increasing jobs," he said. The government would seek to kick-start that recovery through carefully stepped-up public spending, he added.

Mr. Zedillo's remarks "represent a major turning point in fiscal policy," said respected Mexican economist Rogelio Ramirez De Lao, adding that a relaxation in fiscal discipline to boost growth was not necessarily a bad thing.

"It was noticeable — the absence of any mention of a public sector surplus," he added.

Mr. Zedillo, whose

approval rating has slumped to just 34 per cent in recent polls, also promised to create a powerful, independent federal auditor's office.

"That is something totally new, it is a step in the dismantling of the authoritarian presidency and achieving more balance between the powers," Mr. Meyer said.

Mr. Zedillo said he would bring in laws to fight organised crime and drug trafficking and to establish a national public safety system to train and professionalise Mexico's corrupt police.

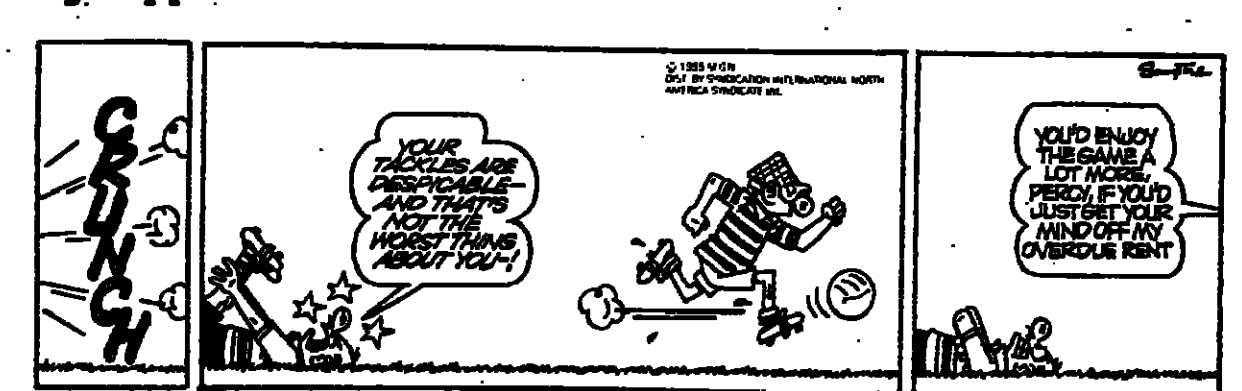
THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



Peanuts



Andy Capp

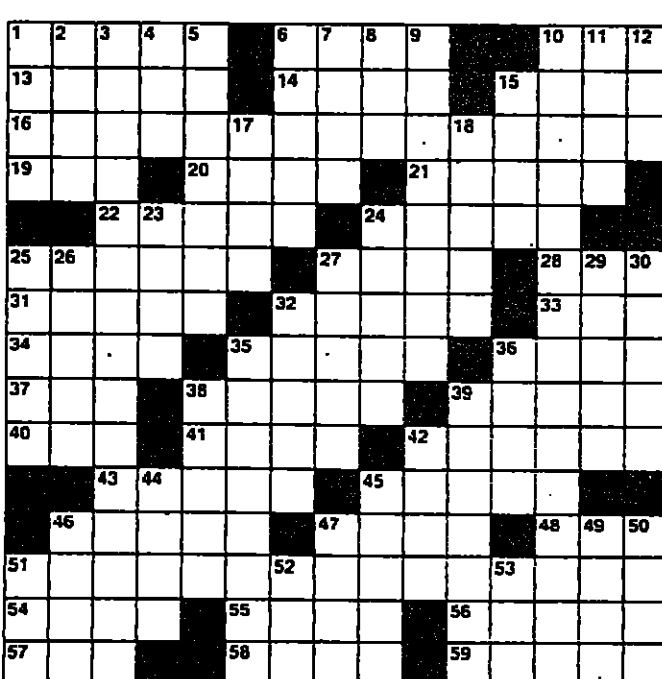


Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword by James Barrick

- ACROSS
- 1 Make sense
 - 6 School event
 - 10 Glutton
 - 13 Inexact
 - 14 Emerald Isle
 - 15 Ridge of sand
 - 16 Symbiosis
 - 19 Volcanic material
 - 20 Spelunking locale
 - 21 Leg bone
 - 22 Gladden
 - 24 Initial
 - 25 Baltimore athlete
 - 27 Tramp
 - 28 Doctrine
 - 31 Van Doren
 - 32 Express a belief
 - 33 Eau-de-
 - 34 Pinches
 - 35 Places for patches
 - 36 Bristle
 - 37 Same: pref.
 - 38 Ferocious one
 - 39 Car
 - 40 Loser to D.D.E.
 - 41 Gen Bradley
 - 42 Frustrate
 - 43 Money substitute
 - 45 Gorge
 - 46 Newsstand
 - 47 City on the Oka
 - 48 Export
 - 51 For all to see
 - 54 Remove, in printing
 - 55 Certain parks
 - 56 Main
 - 57 Reverential fear
 - 58 Goals
 - 59 Seed coat



Yesterday's puzzle solved:



- DOWN
- 1 Inter-
 - 2 Knots and Adams
 - 3 Be superhuman
 - 4 Application
 - 5 Cotton cloth
 - 6 Grievance
 - 7 Mellow
 - 8 Mine yield
 - 9 Cites
 - 10 Jury's award
 - 11 Certain Peruvian
 - 12 Command to a horse
 - 15 Socialites, briefly
 - 17 Appointment
 - 18 Mournful song
 - 23 Superman's girl
 - 24 Airman
 - 25 "vinci amor"
 - 26 Poker action
 - 27 Javelin
 - 29 Stringed instrument
 - 30 Intended
 - 32 Available
 - 35 Suicidal attack
 - 36 Stitches
 - 38 Trunk
 - 39 Green onion
 - 42 A pronoun
 - 44 Inner part
 - 45 Stupid

- 46 Was acquainted with
- 47 Reputation
- 49 Confabulation
- 50 Lab device
- 51 Lupino of films
- 52 "Le Coq -"
- 53 Decorate a cake

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Flight Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Be alert to danger in the business world this morning, and then a fine opportunity may present itself from far away.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A successful business person of your acquaintance can give fine advice for getting ahead, so follow it.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Don't light into a good friend today about some promise made, and later tonight you can discuss your ambitions with others.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Don't mix into an altercation between a family tie and an outsider, and then you can carry through with inspired ideas.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Don't run away from your task because you get a flash idea which is not good, and later today you can enjoy good friends.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you don't commit yourself early today to some new interest, you can easily get some family matter properly handled.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) An associate gives you a new idea which is not very good, so forget it and later get routines improved with other partners.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Don't waste time talking to a stranger and then you can find some new and profitable kind of income.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Don't be extravagant where luxury is concerned today, and find more modern ways of increasing income.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Postpone handling that vexing matter at home and plan the future more wisely so you can be more successful.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't permit some outside affair to get you away from your tasks. Be with persons who can assist you to make personal progress.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Don't waste time gossiping this morning, and then tonight you can handle outside affairs with intelligence.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

U.K. says world arms competition tougher than ever

ALDERSHOT, England (R) — Britain's arms industry faces stiffer competition in a shrinking market and must offer packages of equipment rather than individual products, the defence ministry's chief spokesman has said.

Charles Masefield, head of the Defence Export Services Organisation, said the world's top three exporters of military equipment — the United States, Britain and France — all aimed to capture new trade in a market likely to contract 25 per cent in the next 10 years.

"(Competitors) have never been more aggressive. That is both their industries and their governments," he told a news conference to open Britain's biennial Royal Navy and British Army equipment exhibition.

More than 1,000 potential buyers from 80 countries are attending the invitation-only show to inspect arms and military equipment made by 282 companies.

Mr. Masefield, who works within the ministry of defence to support commercial exporters, said British companies needed to put together packages tailored to each customer country's needs.

UAE needs more steel projects — study

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) needs to set up more steel projects to face growing consumption and cut a large import bill, the state-run Emirates Industrial Bank (EIB) has said.

The UAE, a major oil producer, has nine steel rolling plants but only five are operational with a production capacity of 120,000 tonnes per year and an actual output

of 65-70 per cent of capacity, EIB said in its weekly bulletin.

Steel imports, mostly from Qatar and Turkey, have jumped over the past five years from 375,000 tonnes to 680,000 tonnes per year due to a construction upswing in the emirates, the study said.

Further examination, it said, "What is being proposed is not an investment for making raw steel but a project catering for the needs of the domestic construction industry, which is finishing mill capable of producing steel bars and rods."

It suggested building a steel plant with a capacity of 200,000 tonnes and investment of 350 million dirhams (\$95.3 million). But it stressed the project needed foreign partners for technology. "An investment of such magnitude could not be

realistically made by a single investor. The foreign collaboration would be required not just for financing purposes but, more importantly, for help with technology, start-up and management," the bulletin said.

UAE private investors are considering building a steel plant at a cost of around \$408 million and production capacity of 600,000 tonnes per year. The project has been on the cards for several years and business sources said the delay was due to its large capital.

Steel and other capital intensive projects are highly feasible in the Gulf given its abundant energy resources. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE — sit atop nearly 465 billion barrels of oil and 19 trillion cubic metres (633.3 trillion cubic feet) of gas.

Construction is the second biggest component of the UAE's gross domestic product after oil, standing at around 12.2 billion dirhams (\$3.32 billion) in 1994.

Toyota struggling to stay No. 1 in Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — Toyota Motor Corp. is struggling to maintain its decades-long dominant position, facing a revival among its domestic competitors and increased threats from foreign carmakers in the Japanese market.

Japan's largest carmaker appointed vice president Hiroshi Okuda as new president last month, leaving him with the tough mission of recouping its market share, which plunged below 40 per cent in July for the fifth time this year against a peak of 48.7 per cent eight years ago.

"Toyota is now faced with crucial circumstances," said Noriyuki Matsushima, an analyst of Nikko Research Institute Co. Ltd. "Jobs the new president must handle are very difficult. His ultimate goal is to revive a 'strong Toyota'."

A recovery in its market share is one of the imminent problems of the company, the new president has pointed out.

"We must try our best," Okuda said at his first news conference as new president. Toyota's domestic output in July dropped 14.3 per cent to 267,000 units with its sales down 4.4 per cent to 195,000, while it reduced operations by 10 per cent at its Tomioka factory in Aichi prefecture following slowing demand.

A bearish Toyota has recently cut its domestic vehicle production forecast for this year to 3.22 million units from its earlier estimate of 3.42 million units due to sluggish domestic sales.

Its archrival Nissan Motor Co. Ltd., which has suffered huge losses over the past few years, is showing a gradual recovery, raising its market share to 24 per cent last month on a brisk sales of its newly-introduced Gloria

model.

"At last, we are likely to get through the long tunnel," a Nissan spokesman said. "We have concentrated on our sales division by boosting the number of sales personnel. Our effort has finally paid off."

Nissan's production in July jumped 13.1 per cent to 158,000 and sales, expanded 6.2 per cent to 119,000 to post the ninth consecutive month of year-on-year gains. Toyota, in a bid to achieve an immediate increase in its market share, is widely expected to further reduce prices. "Toyota is still wealthy and strong enough to cut prices," Mr. Matsushima said, "and this is one of the easiest measures to help the company recover."

But a Toyota spokesman denied this was even a possibility. "Prices have already been to the lowest possible level," the spokesman said. "If we cut further, we cannot expect to make a profit. It is unrealistic."

Instead, the company is expecting much from a plan to introduce a fully restyled Crown luxury model this month, he said. The Crown was once Toyota's leading profit maker, beating other luxury cars in Japan.

Meanwhile, imported cars are gradually gaining momentum in the Japanese market, threatening to grab a larger slice of the market.

Sales of imported motor vehicles in Japan surged 17.4 per cent to 35,766 units in July, posting a record high for the month and 21 months of uninterrupted gains.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI				
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179				
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 04/09/1995				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CHANGES
ARAB BANK PJO	760	174445	230.000	225.500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	1723	7749	4.500	4.500
BANK OF JORDAN	2100	7140	3.400	3.400
HYDRO EAST INVESTMENT BANK	4250	4392	1.100	1.100
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	4200	10505	2.500	2.500
THE HOUSING BANK	310	1767	5.700	5.700
JORDAN KUNAFI BANK	657	1685	2.750	2.750
JORDAN GULF BANK	5180	5692	1.100	1.100
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	3881	14595	3.700	3.700
JUSTICE BANK	1000	3820	3.850	3.850
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	2300	9200	4.000	4.000
SEIT REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	100	325	3.240	3.240
ABDOLAH BANK FOR INVESTMENT	85863	84933	990	990
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	866	1344	1.550	1.550
BANKS SECTOR	113202	328542	INDEX NUMBER: 186.75	CHANGE: -0.21
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	6893	2620	2.610	2.610
YASIR INSURANCE & REINSURANCE	1890	1930	3.000	3.100
ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	10000	26000	2.580	2.600
INSURANCE SECTOR	13150	34443	INDEX NUMBER: 135.15	CHANGE: -0.17
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	6187	10094	1.630	1.630
IRBTO DISTRICT ELECTRICITY	100	115	1.150	1.150
ARAB ELECTRICAL & TELECOM	1060	5827	5.500	5.500
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	1600	3340	2.090	2.080
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	10625	12302	1.150	1.150
JORDAN PRINCE FOUNDATION / ALMA	150	1493	9.850	9.950
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMERCE HOTELS	19044	41974	2.180	2.210
ARAB INVEST. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	2300	7306	3.160	3.180
SARFA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	7851	10474	1.320	1.340
SERVICES SECTOR	48917	92923	INDEX NUMBER: 126.02	CHANGE: +0.40
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	5035	10494	3.660	3.680
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	150	480	3.030	3.000
THE ARAB FOSPHAT	1100	5445	4.950	4.950
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	130	1252	9.920	9.430
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	700	2226	3.180	3.180
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	7230	36207	4.980	5.050
THE PUBLIC MINING	100	300	3.000	3.000
DAN AL BANA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	11100	83994	7.450	7.550
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	155100	80627	500	530
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	1000	1390	1.370	1.390
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	1080	1071	1.010	1.020
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	1400	2812	2.000	2.000
JORDAN PETROCHEM. INDUSTRIES	250	285	1.100	1.100
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	100	160	1.600	1.600
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	250	538	2.130	2.130
KARTER INVESTMENT	1800	2812	1.500	1.580
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	1200	3180	3.160	3.160
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	4822	9601	1.950	1.950
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY	6500	10831	1.670	1.690
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	34800	47785	1.330	1.380
UNION CHEMICAL & VEGETABLE OIL INDUSTRIES	387	791	2.080	2.080
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	234117	310475	INDEX NUMBER: 125.27	CHANGE: +0.01
GRAND TOTAL	409386	766382	INDEX NUMBER: 156.74	CHANGE: +0.26
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET		111150		
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET		84894		

Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets			
Currency	New York Close 4/9/95	Tokyo Close 4/9/95	London 4/9/95
British Pound	1.5560	1.5601**	
Deutsche Mark	1.4828	1.4596	
Swiss Franc	1.1965	1.1963**	
French Franc	5.0464	5.0383**	
Japanese Yen	97.43	97.10	
European Currency Unit	1.8765	1.8811**	

Eurocurrency Interest Rates				
Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.68	5.68	5.68	5.62
British Pound	6.50	6.50	6.56	6.62
Deutsche Mark	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00
Swiss Franc	2.82	2.82	2.82	2.82
French Franc	5.56	5.56	5.56	5.56
Japanese Yen	0.62	0.58	0.58	0.58
European Currency Unit	5.53	5.50	5.53	5.62

Precious Metals				
Metal	USD/oz	JD/oz	Metal	USD/oz
Gold	380.15	7.50	Silver	5.31

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin			
Currency	Buy	Offer	
U.S. Dollar	0.710	0.712	
British Pound	1.1046	1.1104	
Deutsche Mark	0.4660	0.4684	
Swiss Franc	0.5937	0.5967	
French Franc	0.1406	0.1413	
Japanese Yen	0.7315	0.7352	
Dutch Guilder	0.4336	0.4358	
Swedish Krona	0.0638	0.0640	
Italian Lira	0.0038	0.0040	
Belgian Franc	0.0038	0.0040	

Other Currencies			
Currency	Buy	Offer	
Bahraini Dinar	1.8670	1.8670	
Lebanese Lira	0.003090	0.004000	
Saudi Riyal	0.18903	0.19040	
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3000	2.3000	
Qatari Riyal	0.1938	0.1952	
Egyptian Pound	0.2060	0.2180	
Omani Riyal	1.8350	1.8450	
UAE Dirham	0.1924	0.1936	
Greek Drachma	0.2829	0.3270	
Cypriot Pound	1.5075	1.5075	

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One U.S. dollar	1.3430/40	Canadian dollar	1.4782/92
	1.6338/48	Deutsche marks	1.6338/48
	1.9444/54	Dutch guilders	29.99/03
	29.99/03	Swiss francs	5.0348/98
	1623.6/4.6	Belgian francs	97.32/42
	7.2520/30	French francs	6.3810/60
	6.3810/60	Italian lire	5.6680/30
	5.6680/30	Japanese yen	
		Swedish crowns	
		Norwegian crowns	
		Danish crowns	

One Sterling	\$1.5584/94
One ounce of gold	\$379.85/380.35

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Real Madrid start season with a bang

MADRID (R) — Spanish champions Real Madrid started the new season in splendid style on Sunday with a 5-1 romp away to newly promoted Rayo Vallecano, the capital's third club.

Real, 1-0 up at the interval after a 29th-minute goal by Jose Amavisca, cut loose after the break with World Cup midfielder Fernando Hierro scoring twice between goals from Sandro Sierra and Quique Flores.

Brazilian Guilherme netted Rayo's consolation goal when Real were already 4-0 up.

Real made light of the absence of injured Chilean Ivan Zamorano, league top scorer last season, and Danish playmakers Michael Laudrup, needed for Wednesday's European Championship qualifier against Belgium.

There were few surprises on the opening weekend of the season with all the championship favourites winning. Barcelona won 2-0 at Valladolid but Johan Cruyff's expensive rebuild side were fortunate not to go behind in the first half.

After the interval well-taken goals by former Tottenham defender Gica Popescu and promising Ivan de la Pena sealed the three points.

Another rebuilt team delighted with their start were Atletico Madrid, who conceded the first goal against Real Sociedad but bounced



Real Madrid's Luis Enrique (foreground) and Quiquero (background) celebrate their Sept. 3 match. Real Madrid won 5-1 (AFP photo)

back to win their home clash 4-1.

Russian Valery Karpin put Sociedad in front midway through the first half but a crashing free-kick from Serbian Milinko Pantic made it 1-1 at half-time.

Two goals — one a penalty — by Bulgaria's Lyuboslav Penev and a last strike by Argentine midfielder Diego Simeone 15 minutes from the end completed an excellent Atletico victory.

Athletic Bilbao were equally impressive in a 4-0 home eclipse of racing San-

tander.

Espanol had to work a little harder for their 3-1 home victory over newly promoted Salamanca, while Cup Winners' Cup holders Real Zaragoza managed only a 1-0 win at home to Oviedo.

Merida, beginning their first-ever season in the top flight, were disappointed not to notch a home win.

They took an early lead against UEFA Cup representatives Real Betis, were pegged back just before the break and had a clear penalty turned down in injury time.

The traumatic summers suffered by Sevilla and Celta, relegated for financial problems then grudgingly reinstated, seem to have taken a heavy toll.

Both teams lost at home to a solitary goal, against Tenerife and Compostela respectively.

Deportivo Coruna, managed by former Welsh international John Toshack, kicked off the season in fine form on Saturday, easily beating Valencia 3-0 in a repeat of last season's cup final.

Tyson happy with Bruno victory

LONDON (AP) — Mike Tyson didn't make it to the ringside to see Frank Bruno take the world heavyweight title from Oliver McCall. He couldn't get clearance from the parole board.

Had he been among the 23,000 fans who saw Bruno win the title at the fourth attempt Saturday, Tyson would have liked what he saw.

Tyson has beaten Bruno before, and there was little in this latest performance to suggest the 33-year-old British fighter will be any more of a menace when they meet again.

"Mike Tyson sent his hearty congratulations to Frank," promoter Don King said Sunday. "As we called him, Mike answered by saying: 'Don't tell me. I bet you Frank won.' He took the punch line away," King said.

"He said: 'Give him my best, tell him that's great.' It is great for Bruno. Once King has set up a fairly straightforward defence against a lower-ranked fighter, the British heavyweight will be looking at a \$100 million fight with Tyson.

It's also great for Tyson. He knows he took Bruno's best punch before coming back to nail him in five rounds in 1989.

For much of the fight at Wembley Stadium, Bruno appeared little changed from the time he lost his first world title challenge to Tim Witherspoon in 1986, to Tyson three years later and to Lennox Lewis two years ago.

Each time he started well, landing big early punches, but then he ran out of gas. The difference was, at those three fights his opponents came up with knock-out punches. McCall simply couldn't find his.

The man who knocked out Lewis in two rounds to win the title a year ago was unable to locate the suspect Bruno chin with anything more than the occasional slap and went home without his title after losing a unanimous decision.

He lost his chance for earning big money with Tyson. Now, Bruno has his.

But King doesn't want the British fighter to rush. "He dropped the gauntlet to Tyson, and Tyson is ready to accept it," King said.

"But Frank's won the title and now he should take a little time to enjoy it. For the next six to nine months he can enjoy his family and content himself because naturally he's going to make millions when he does fight."

"Tyson will be the No. 1 contender, but there's Bruce Seldon (WBA titlist) and Axel Schulz and South Africa's Frans Botha who fight in Germany for the vacant IBF title," King said.

"We have got so many guys out there to make a match with, Bruno, it seems, can't wait to get at Tyson, even though he's on friendly terms with the former undisputed champion. "I respect him and I love him because he's good for boxing. But my main dream of all is to fight Mike Tyson in a rematch," he said.

New teams, new venues, new faces as NFL kicks off

OAKLAND (AP) — It was as if the Raiders had never been away.

The erstwhile Los Angeles National Football League club returned to Oakland, the city they left in 1982, and beat last season's Super Bowl runners-up San Diego 17-7 in front of 50,323 delighted fans.

The Raiders seemed a right at home as they gave Mike White a victory in his NFL coaching debut. They played tough defense and capitalised on two turnovers in the second half, one by Natrone Means and the other by Andre Coleman.

Raiders quarterback Jeff Hostetler had a five-yard touchdown pass to Tim Brown and rookie Napoleon Kaufman ran 16 yards for a touchdown. Cole Ford's 46-yard field goal completed the Oakland scoring.

The Rams, the other ex-Los Angeles club now stationed in St. Louis, didn't get to open in their new home town.

But they surprised Green Bay anyway, picking off quarterback Brett Favre three times in a 17-14 victory.

Quarterback Chris Miller completed 19 of 30 for 166 yards and two touchdowns as the Rams gave their new coach Rich Brooks a win.

For the Carolina Panthers and Jacksonville Jaguars, it wasn't just a new coach and a new town. It was a new everything.

The expansion teams met predictable defeats in their debut games, though Carolina gave Atlanta a scare before falling 23-20 in overtime.

Morten Anderson kicked

the deciding 55-yard field goal at 6:17 of overtime after Lester Archambeau stripped Panthers quarterback Frank Reich of the ball.

Carolina had forced the extra time when Reich hit Willie Green with a 44-yard TD pass with 26 seconds left in regulation.

Jacksonville were less impressive, gaining only 151 yards in their 10-3 loss to Houston.

Life without Joe Montana officially began for the Kansas City Chiefs, and the rest of the NFL, in Seattle. The Chiefs seemed to be more than surviving Montana's departure as Steve Bono threw three touchdown passes in a 34-10 victory that ruined Seahawks coach Dennis Erickson's NFL debut.

Bono completed 18 of 23 attempts for 278 yards. Willie Davis caught six passes for 155 yards, including touchdown losses of 60 and 40 yards.

Miami lived up in their pre-season hype with a 52-14 drubbing of the New York Jets. Dan Marino threw three touchdown passes and Troy

Vincent ran back an interception 69 yards for a score as the Dolphins ran up their biggest points total since a 55-14 win over St. Louis in 1977.

Even Miami's mistakes didn't seem to hurt. Bernie Parmelee fumbled twice, but made up for it by scoring on runs and 34 and four yards.

Super Bowl champions San Francisco had to work a little harder at New Orleans, pulling off a 34-22 victory over the Saints.

Steve Young connected for two touchdowns, including a 50-yard throw to Jerry Rice. Young was sacked five times and left the game briefly with a pinched nerve in his neck. He returned in the second half.

In other games it was Washington 27 Arizona 7, Chicago 31 Minnesota 14, Cincinnati 24, Indianapolis 21 over time, Tampa Bay 21 Philadelphia 6, and Denver 22 Buffalo 7.

The Dallas Cowboys round off week one when they visit the New York Giants on Monday night.

NFL RESULTS

Atlanta	23	Carolina	20 (OT)
St. Louis	17	Green Bay	14
Cincinnati	24	Indianapolis	21 (OT)
Houston	10	Jacksonville	3
San Francisco	34	New Orleans	22
New England	17	Cleveland	14
Tampa Bay	21	Philadelphia	6
Pittsburgh	23	Detroit	20
Chicago	31	Minnesota	14
Miami	52	NY Jets	14
Oakland	17	San Diego	7
Kansas City	34	Seattle	10
Washington	27	Arizona	7
Buffalo	7	Denver	22

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Croatia overwhelm Estonia 7-1

ZAGREB (AP) — Davor Suker scored three goals to lead Croatia to a 7-1 victory over winless Estonia Sunday and move six points clear of Italy atop group 4 in European championship qualifying. Playing before a sell-out crowd of 25,000 at Zagreb's Maksimir Stadium, Croatia went on the attack from the start and dominated the lopsided game throughout. The victory improved Croatia to 6-1-1 and 19 points, six more than second-placed Italy (4-1-1), which has played two fewer games and faces Slovenia on Wednesday. The top team in each of eight groups automatically qualifies along with the six best second-placed teams for next summer's finals. The other two second-place finishers must play off in a one-game knockout match for the final berth in the 16-team field. England qualifies as host.

Penarol recruit Red Army general

BEIJING (AP) — Uruguayan football club Penarol have offered \$250,000 for Hao Haoding, midfielder general for China's national team and the Army side. However, Penarol have insisted on a six-month trial period which may block the first move of a Chinese player to a major overseas club, the Yangcheng Evening News reported. The Army club, propping up the Chinese championship, were reluctant to let Hao go for the last six months of the season if they could not be guaranteed the full transfer fee. Penarol have offered Hao \$2,500 a month during his trial period and would also pay his board and lodging and travel expenses. Penarol spotted the 25-year-old when they played two matches in China last month.

Italian ex-player dies

BRESCIA (R) — Former Italian soccer player Edoardo Bortolotti, 25, died on Saturday after falling from a third-floor balcony, and police and his family said they believed he had committed suicide. Bortolotti, who played as a defender for Brescia in both the first and second divisions and made four appearances for Italy's Under-21 side, died in hospital in the northern town of Brescia, where he was flown by helicopter after being found injured. Police said he had fallen 10 metres from the balcony of his parent's third-floor apartment in the village of Gavardo. He was alone in the apartment at the time.

Portugal draw with N. Ireland

OPORTO, Portugal (AP) — Porto striker Domingos Paciencia scored two minutes into the second half to help Portugal to a 1-1 draw with Northern Ireland on Sunday, extending its lead over Ireland atop European Championship qualifying Group 6. Barcelona midfielder Luis Figo set up the goal, sending a cross that got past teammate Antonio Folha only to land at the feet of Paciencia. The Porto striker spun 180 degrees and smacked the ball past Northern Irish keeper Alan Pettis, sending the crowd at Antas Stadium into celebration.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
A YAMANA HUSSEIN
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GREEDY, GREEDY

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH		SOUTH	
♠ A 9 8 6	♠ J 3	♠ Q 10 9 5	♠ Q A K
♥ A 8 7	♥ Q J 8 7	♥ Q A K	♥ Q 10 7 2
♦ A 8 4	♦ 8 4	♦ 10 7 2	♦ 10 7 2
♣ A K J 5 5	♣ 10 4	♣ 10 5 3 2	♣ 10 5 3 2

The bidding:
SOUTH: 1♣, 2♦, 3♦, 4♦, 5♦, 6♦, 7♦, 8♦, 9♦, 10♦, 11♦, 12♦, 13♦, 14♦, 15♦, 16♦, 17♦, 18♦, 19♦, 20♦, 21♦, 22♦, 23♦, 24♦, 25♦, 26♦, 27♦, 28♦, 29♦, 30♦, 31♦, 32♦, 33♦, 34♦, 35♦, 36♦, 37♦, 38♦, 39♦, 40♦, 41♦, 42♦, 43♦, 44♦, 45♦, 46♦, 47♦, 48♦, 49♦, 50♦, 51♦, 52♦, 53♦, 54♦, 55♦, 56♦, 57♦, 58♦, 59♦, 60♦, 61♦, 62♦, 63♦, 64♦, 65♦, 66♦, 67♦, 68♦, 69♦, 70♦, 71♦, 72♦, 73♦, 74♦, 75♦, 76♦, 77♦, 78♦, 79♦, 80♦, 81♦, 82♦, 83♦, 84♦, 85♦, 86♦, 87♦, 88♦, 89♦, 90♦, 91♦, 92♦, 93♦, 94♦, 95♦, 96♦, 97♦, 98♦, 99♦, 100♦.

Opening lead: Seven of ♠.

The first world championship, albeit unrecognized at the time, was an official match between the best teams of Europe and the United States in 1935. The Four Aces represented the U.S. France, led by the brilliant Pierre Albarin, was the reigning European champion. This deal is from a practice match before the great encounter.

The auction could be out of a modern textbook. Albarin, West, found himself on lead against three no trump and chose a passive spade. Declarer played low from dummy and East's queen won. A heart was returned to the table's king. Declarer

er could count eight tricks, and elected to play on clubs for the ninth. Accordingly, the nine of clubs was ruse from the board. It won!

Declarer now had nine tricks, and there are those of us who would have scampered home. But declarer was convinced that the jack of clubs had been "focussed" with East, so the lure of an overtrick was irresistible.

Declarer continued with a club to the ten, and the roof fell in. Albarin rattled off four tricks in the suit for a one-trick set.

Sitting South was one of the great American players of that time. Should he have been taken in by West's defense? In all honesty, we must state that we, too, would have swallowed the bait.

Tour of Spain begins

LOGRONO, Spain (AP) — Italian Nicola Minali, riding for Gewiss-Ballan, won the first stage of the Tour of Spain Sunday, covering the 186 kilometres (115 miles) from Zaragoza to Logrono in 5 hours, 42 minutes and 45 seconds. Spaniard Abraham Olano, riding for Italian team Mapei-GB, finished No. 17 and kept the overall lead after winning the prologue Saturday. Jeroen Blijlevens of the Netherlands, riding for TVM-Verzekeringen, placed second with the same time as Minali. They were followed by the main pack, which consisted of the bulk of the 179 participants, at the same time. All-terrain rider Laurent Jalabert of France, riding for Spain's Once, finished third, also moving up to third from fifth place in the overall standing.

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Morceli looks to reward Rieti with a record

ROME (R) — Algeria's Noureddine Morceli leads a host of world champions on Tuesday on what could well be a record breaking farewell to the central Italian town of Rieti's annual athletics meeting, now beset by a drop in sponsors.

Morceli, the world 1,500 metres champion and a local favourite, wants to mark the 25th edition of the Rieti event by breaking the 3,000 metres world best of seven minutes 25.11 seconds he set in Monte Carlo last year.

The Algerian, an honorary citizen of Rieti after setting the 1,500 metres and mile world records at meetings in 1992 and 1993, is not alone in chasing records in what could be the town's final major meeting for some time.

Ireland's 5,000 metres world champion Sonia O'Sullivan has announced she intends to try and break the women's mile record set by Romanian Paula Ivan in Nice in 1989.

It would not be the first

time the small-town track, with a backdrop of Italy's Abruzzi Mountains, had witnessed such a feat. In 1982 Romania's Marica Puica broke American Mary Decker's mile world record here.

Kenya's Moses Kiptanui, the 3,000 metres steeplechase world champion and record holder, has said he wants to try and break the two mile best but the attempt looks doubtful after an exhausting 5,000 metres in Berlin on Friday.

Organisers say Britain's triple jump world record holder Jonathan Edwards has promised to be at the meeting, along with pole vault world champion Sergei Bubuka of the Ukraine.

Double world champion Michael Johnson of the United States has arrived in town and will run the 200 metres while organisers say Britain's 100 metres Olympic champion Linford Christie is "90 per cent" certain to appear.

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Birds of the Darkness
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Fukuoka spent 3b on Student Games

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Fukuoka spent \$3b on Student Games

FUKUOKA (AFP) — Fukuoka's mayor justified spending three billion dollars on the biggest-ever World Student Games by saying Monday the event could be seen as an opening gambit to host a future Olympic Games.

Keiichi Kuwahara, speaking a day after the 12-day Student Games closed, indicated the city may — despite worries about high-budget capital projects — one day bid to stage the Olympics.

The 72-year-old mayor added: "I don't know if I'd be still alive then... but I take the reputed success of this Universiade as the first step."

The three billion dollars spent on the Universiade went into building six new sports facilities as well as roads which city officials say will spur the urban redevelopment of this 1,000-year-old port city.

But some citizens groups have warned that excessive investment in construction — at the expense of welfare and education — would cause the city's finances, which depend on bond issues for 16 per cent of its budget, to collapse.

Having secured only limited sponsorship money at a time of slow economic recovery, the city also spent 170 million dollars on running the biennial event, which attracted a record 5,740 athletes and officials from 162 countries.

An average 65 per cent of the 150,000 seats at venues for the 12-sport games were filled daily, "exceeding our expectations," games ticketing official Shigeru Imafuku said.

Fukuoka, which will stage the 1997 Pan-Pacific swimming championships, has already bid for the 2001 East Asian Games for which the Japanese City of Osaka is also a candidate.

"The Universiade was a fantastic publicity for Fukuoka," said sport supremo Primo Nebinto, who heads the Student Games governing body and the powerful International Amateur Athletic Association.

The next games will be held at the Italian island of Sicily in 1997 and the Spanish resort of Majorca in 1999.

Sanchez Vicario ousted in U.S. Open stunner

NEW YORK (AFP) — The chances of a U.S. Open final showdown between co-number ones Steffi Graf and Monica Seles improved tremendously here Sunday with the ouster of 1994 women's champion Arantxa Sanchez Vicario.

The third-seeded Spaniard made the earliest exit by a defending Open women's champion since 1986, losing to 14th seed Mary Joe Fernandez 1-6, 6-4, 6-4.

The biggest stunner so far at the \$9.86 million tournament denied Sanchez Vicario her seventh consecutive quarter-final berth and sent Fernandez into a match with ninth seed Gabriela Sabatini.

The result removes a major obstacle for reigning Wimbledon and French Open champion Graf, whose path to the final now includes only Amy Frazier and the Sabatini-Fernandez survivor.

Sanchez Vicario was a finalist in six of the past seven Grand Slam tournaments and runner-up in this year's three prior Slams, losing to Steffi Graf at Wimbledon and the French Open and Mary Pierce in Australia.

"I'm a human being," Sanchez Vicario said. "It's impossible to get always what you want when you want it. I have many more tournaments to go. It was unlucky. But I have many years to go. I have much to learn from this match."

No reigning Open women's champion had been sent packing so early since Hana Mandlikova was knocked out in the same round in 1986.

"I didn't play at all like I had to," Sanchez Vicario said. "I should have finished her off and won in two sets. I lost the match more than she won it. She is a dangerous player and she had nothing to lose."

Fernandez made 51 unforced errors but saved 20 break points to keep Sanchez Vicario frustrated. She broke Sanchez Vicario on four points in the sixth game, aided by two double faults, to pull even at 3-3.

In the final game, Fernandez broke to win when Sanchez Vicario was long with a backhand volley. She had saved a prior match point on an awkward job off the bottom of her racket frame.

"The only chance I had was to come in and take chances and it paid off," Fernandez said. "I try to focus on my game and attack as

much as I can against players like Arantxa."

Reigning Wimbledon champion Pete Sampras and Graf advanced in much different fashion earlier.

Big-serving Australian Mark Philippoussis, an 18-year-old ranked 93rd in the world, gave world number two Sampras a scare before falling 6-7 (5-7), 7-5, 7-5, 6-3.

The two-hour, 50-minute triumph by Sampras sends him into a round of 16 matchup with friend and 15th seeded fellow American Todd Martin.

Sampras served 27 aces to 15 for Philippoussis, who had nine double faults to 14 by Sampras. The American had 69 winners and 33 unforced errors to 59 winners and 40 errors for Philippoussis.

"His serve was so big I had a hard time reading it," Sampras said. "I was kind of confused out there. I looked like an idiot. He's very dangerous. I played well when I had to. I will have to play a little better as the tournament goes along."

Martin, a 1994 semi-finalist here, reached the round of 16 by beating Colombia's Mauricio Hadad 6-2, 6-1, 6-3.

Unheralded two-third volleys Byron Black of Zimbabwe and Michael Tebbutt of Australia advanced to the round of 16. Tebbutt faces

fifth seed Michael Chang, who beat Australia's Todd Woodbridge 6-3, 6-2, 6-1, while Black meet eighth seed Stich, who humped Australia's Scott Draper 6-3, 6-4, 6-0, 6-3.

Third seed Thomas Muster and 14th seed Jim Courier, a former world number one, also advanced with victories.

Graf reached the quarter-finals here for the 11th consecutive year, dispatching 16th-ranked Chanda Rubin 6-2, 6-2, in 54 minutes. Graf broke Rubin in the fifth and seventh games of each set, taking advantage of the American's 31 unforced errors.

Graf, a three-time winner here and 17-time Grand Slam singles champion, has won six titles and compiled a 36-1 record this year. She has a 18-7 record here in the quarter-finals and beyond, having won the title in 1988, 1989 and 1993.

Graf's only loss this year came in her only match between the Open and Wimbledon, when she was beaten by Coetzee in the Canadian Open first round.

Sabatini, who reached the quarter-finals here for a ninth straight year by eliminating 14-year-old Swiss rookie Martina Hingis 6-2, 6-4, Sabatini, who won the indoor

WTA Championships here in November, needed only 71 minutes to beat Hingis, who committed 41 unforced errors (See separate story).

U.S. Open notebook

★ **Blood drive:** The tennis community is rallying behind former top-20 player Leslie Allen-Selmore whose 7-month-old daughter, Rachel Elayne, is in need of a bone marrow donor.

The infant has a rare blood disease known as Hemophagocytic Lymphohistiocytosis and none of the family members are a match.

A blood drive was conducted Friday for close to five hours in the women's locker-room and 91 potential donors gave blood samples to be tissue typed.

After upsetting sixth-seeded Mary Pierce, Amy Frazier went straight from her press conference to give blood.

Other players giving blood samples included Martina Navratilova, Mary Joe Fernandez, Gigi Fernandez, Pam Shriver, Lisa Raymond, Lori McNeil, Natasha Zvereva and Chanda Rubin.

Zina Garrison Jackson's schedule prevented her from giving blood at the U.S. Open site, so she is making alternative arrangements to

be tissue typed.

★ **Check on Chang:** If Michael Chang doesn't win this year's U.S. Open, it's worth keeping an eye on who he loses to.

For the past four years, Chang has gone down to the eventual U.S. Open champion.

Last year, Chang lost to Andre Agassi in a five-set match in the fourth round. In 1993, Chang lost to Pete Sampras in a four-set quarterfinal match. In 1992, Chang lost to Stefan Edberg in a five-set semifinal match. In 1991, Chang again lost to Edberg in a three-set fourth-round match.

★ **Head line news:** Imported to the U.S. Open for the first time is axelle, a top hairstylist with Jacques Desjardis, who has coiffed player's hair at the French Open since 1983.

USA network filmed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario receiving a haircut Wednesday afternoon. On Tuesday, John McEnroe scheduled an appointment for between commenting stunts for USA network.

Others who have had their hair cut include Pete Sampras, Jim Courier, Stefan Edberg, Guy Forget, Emilio Sanchez, Jakob Hlasek and Fabrice Santoro.



Unseeded 14-year-old Martina Hingis of Switzerland reacts in the second set against ninth seeded Gabriela Sabatini. Sabatini won 6-2, 6-4 (AFP photo)

Hingis still impressive, even in loss

NEW YORK (AP) — There were moments on Sunday when 14-year-old Martina Hingis looked her age, tossing her racket in frustration, looking skyward for help as her excellent U.S. Open adventure ended abruptly in a 6-2, 6-4 loss to Gabriela Sabatini.

A missed return here, a lost opportunity there. Hingis let the anger hang out there a couple of times, like a kid who had been ordered to her room.

"I am not the only one who does that," she said. "It's certainly worse with the men and it also is not surprising that when I am frustrated inside, I don't show it in some way. It is normal."

Not much else is for this wunderkind. She has the tennis community convinced she will be its next big star and nothing she did Sunday changed many minds about that.

Sabatini, who began playing the Open when Hingis was 2 years old, used her court savvy to wear down the teen-ager. Still, the No. 9 seed was suitably impressed with the youngster.

"I had to play great tennis on every point," said Sabatini, who reached the quarterfinals for the ninth consecutive year. "She makes you play 100 per cent. She moves so well. She gets everything back. I tried to mix up my game to make her uncomfortable but it didn't seem to bother her."

How good can Hingis become? "She's already a very good player," Sabatini said. "I can't imagine how good she'll be in one year, two years."

All things considered, Hingis' week at the U.S. Open was very productive. She reached the fourth round of a Grand Slam tournament for the first time, gaining valuable experience. She played two matches on centre court, soaking up the atmosphere.

She appreciated the experience, even if it did seem a little weird.

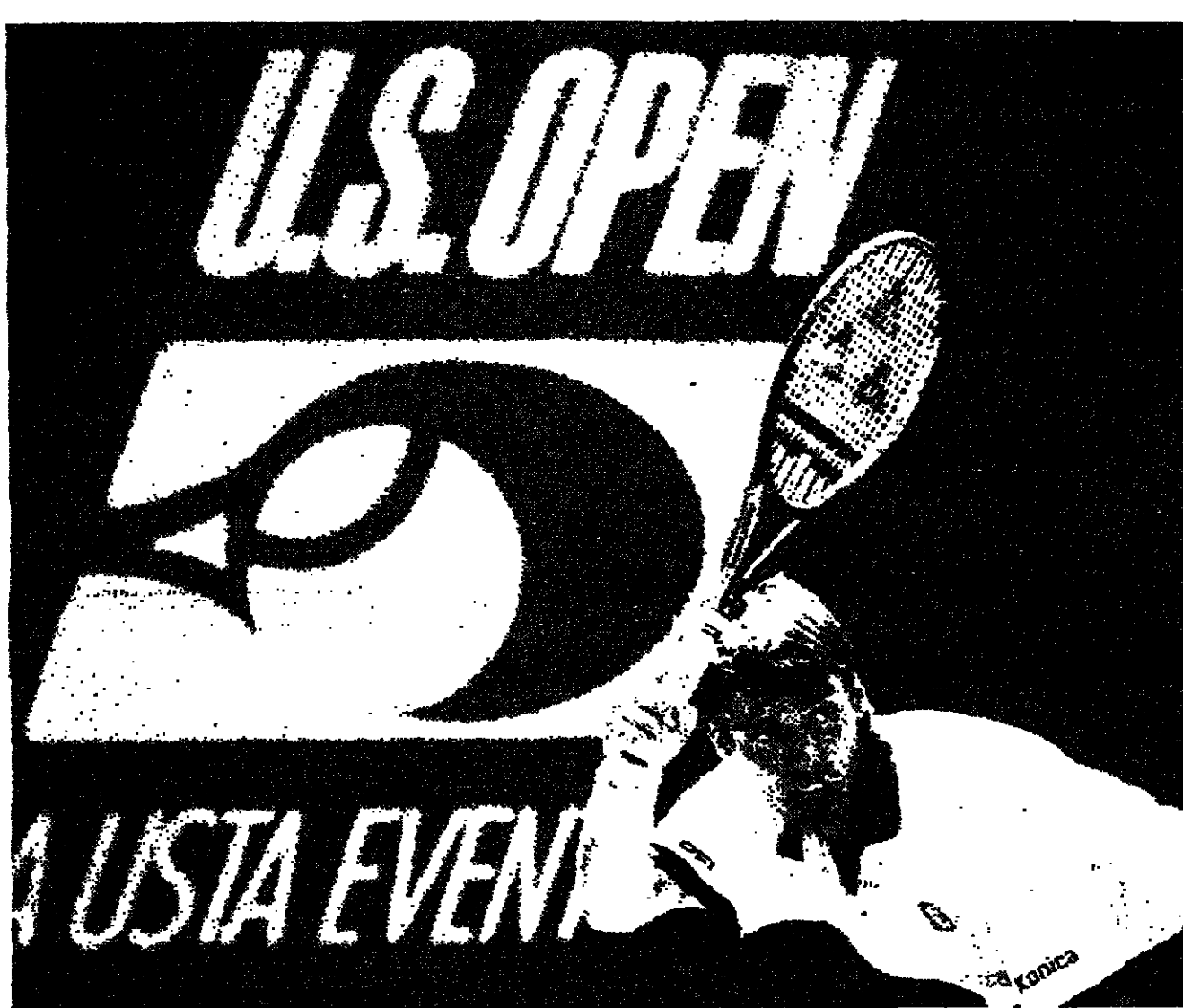
"Every Grand Slam is a special tournament," Hingis said through a translator. "In certain ways, it's a little crazy being out there at 14."

Sabatini remembered what it was like for her as a kid starting out on the tour.

"I was very little," she said. "They would tell me, 'it's time to go play,' and I would go play. That's what I wanted to do. That's all I wanted to do. Just to go to the court and play."

"It's very different. You feel different because you don't have any pressures, you don't have any responsibilities."

Sabatini's responsibility Sunday was not to be defeated by this little girl. And she was never in real danger of having that happen.



Michael Stich of Germany returns a shot to Australia's Scott Draper (AFP photo)



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INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE ORGANISATION

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The **Northern Consortium and Rawdat Al Ma'aref School and College** ran an advertisement in the September 4, 1995 issue of the Jordan Times which states that students with International Baccalaureate will be accepted in the Foundation Year Programme offered at Al Ma'aref.

This is incorrect and misleading as it implies that International Baccalaureate Diploma holders would need a foundation course to gain entry to these British universities. The I.B. Diploma is recognised by British universities as qualifying its holders for university entrance, i.e. as equivalent to fulfilment of 'A' level requirements. I.B. diploma holders would have no need to attend this Foundation Year or any other course in order to gain entry into the universities that form this consortium or any others.

In fact, recognition of the merits and high standard of the I.B. programme, as well as the 'quality' of its students, have led to some of the most prestigious universities in the world actually seeking out I.B. diploma holders. The I.B. is taught in 606 schools around the world, 29 of them in the United Kingdom, and it enjoys recognition in over 65 countries, with the United States and the United Kingdom at the top of the list.



TEST SITE: A partial view of the Mururoa atoll, where the last series of French nuclear tests are scheduled to take place between Sept. 1 1995 and May 1996. The Greenpeace organisation and other anti-nuclear activists are campaigning to dissuade France from conducting the tests (AFP photo)

New bomb scare spreads fear in France

PARIS (Agencies) — Police defused a powerful gas canister bomb outside a Paris metro station on Monday that sent new fears through a French nation already jittery from a wave of blasts and attempts.

The 25-kilogramme device, dismantled after a cleaner found it in a public toilet, was the fifth bomb planted in France in 40 days by suspected Algerian extremists. Three of them exploded, killing a total of seven people and wounding 101.

The latest bomb, concealed on a busy square near the Convention underground train station in the 15th arrondissement (district), was planted just 50 metres from a school on the day that hundreds of thousands of schoolchildren returned to class amid tight security after the summer holidays.

"An explosive device made up of a gas canister full of an explosive which has not yet been identified and a detonator has been neutralised," Paris police prefect (chief) Philippe Massoni told reporters at the scene.

The discovery was made barely 24 hours after a pressure-cooker bomb misfired in a crowded open-air Paris market, wounding four people. A massacre was avoided only because most of the explosives failed to ignite.

Monday's attempted bombing coincided with the opening of a trial in Brussels of 13 suspected members of Algeria's most militant fundamentalist group, the Islamic Armed Group (GIA), which police believe is behind the wave of attacks in France.

Paris put schools on high alert as the end of holidays sparked fears that children might be the next target of bombers who have shown they are bent on causing death at random.

Sunday's explosion was the third in the French capital in less than six weeks. The blasts have killed a total of seven and wounded more than 100. Two earlier devices were also contained in gas canisters.

A fourth gas canister bomb, planted on the track used by France's high-speed trains near Lyon, central

France, on Aug. 26, failed to go off.

French authorities believe the bombing campaign is the work of the GIA, which is fighting to overthrow the country's military-backed regime.

The GIA, known to have planted gas canister bombs in Algeria, has accused the French government of backing the Algerians regime.

A dozen alleged GIA members went on trial in Brussels amid tight security. The accused include Ahmad Zaoui, 35, an Algerian suspected of being a leading figure in the GIA, one of the most radical of the guerrilla groups to topple Algeria's military-backed regime.

The trial is being closely watched in France in the hope it will cast light on the activities of the GIA's European network.

Abdul Karim Deneche, the reported leader of the GIA in Europe, is currently in custody in Sweden and French authorities have requested his extradition in connection with the July 25 blast at the

Saint Michel underground station.

French police have also been pursuing a possible Belgian connection to the attacks.

Brussels police said Monday they had carried out raids on five addresses in the capital Sunday after a tip-off from French authorities.

However, the raids failed to produce any evidence of arms running by the targeted Islamic activists.

Belgian police sources have also stressed there is no evidence to link those on trial in Belgium with the Paris bombings.

Zaoui was one of 13 men arrested in March in two police swoops aimed at dismantling GIA operations in Belgium.

One of them, Yousef Al Majda, has since been expelled to his native Morocco.

The others — seven Algerians, two Moroccans, one Libyan and two Belgians of north African origin — are charged with various offences including belonging to a criminal organisation, fraud and weapons violations.

Hamas urges PLO to launch dialogue

GAZA (R) — The militant movement Hamas called on Monday for a "comprehensive, serious" dialogue with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in what it said was an effort to close Palestinian ranks.

Hamas also demanded the release of its activists from PNA prisons as a goodwill gesture.

"We in the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas see... that we must immediately start in a comprehensive, serious national dialogue that will be binding to all influential groups in the Palestinian arena including the authority (PNA) and the opposition," Hamas said in a statement.

Hamas said the aim of the dialogue was "to reach an understanding that will organise the nature of the Palestinian national work at this critical stage of our people's history."

The Hamas movement is the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) bitter rival. Vowing to wreck the 1993 Palestinian self-rule peace deal with Israel, Hamas has carried out a series of suicide bombings that have killed scores of Israelis.

One Hamas official called for an agreement with the PNA before its authority extends to the West Bank for fear of further erosion of Hamas support.

PLO officials said that since PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's return to Gaza from exile last year, he has tried to contain Hamas through dialogue. The sides exchanged draft agreements but none was signed.

Palestinian police have cracked down on Hamas following the suicide attacks. Many Hamas military and political leaders have been arrested and some tried in a military court and sentenced to long jail terms.

Israel and PLO hope to clinch an agreement for expanding self-rule this month.

Hamas blamed the PNA for the absence of dialogue because it chose "the option of repression and confrontation with Hamas movement pushed by American and Israeli direct and open pressures."

"If the authority is concerned with having a dialogue, it is called upon to show national goodwill gestures and release all political detainees and to halt the repression campaign against Hamas movement," the statement said.

Hamas warned Israel and its prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, to refrain from "deepening the split among Palestinians by using some of its tools in the Palestinian Authority," and said that their "surprises" would be "larger than all the Israeli security precautions."

On Sunday, Israeli and PLO sources said Israel allowed two top Hamas men to meet their jailed leader, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, hoping to foster an accord between the movement and the Palestinian self-rule authority.

Hisham Abdul Razak, a senior PLO official who negotiates with Hamas, said the sides had already drafted such an understanding in June. But it was put off after a Tel Aviv bus bombing in July, after a hiatus of several months, and Mr. Arafat's subsequent arrests of Hamas activists.

Scores of Israelis have been killed in attacks by Hamas and the smaller, more militant Islamic Jihad group over the past year.

But there are now indications of a rift between Hamas' local leaders and those operating from Amman, Damascus and other areas.

Khaled Amayreh, a Hebrew University journalism professor and Hamas expert, said Hamas activists in the West Bank and Gaza are more interested in winning a

share of power than those outside, who are still determined to scuttle the Israel-PLO peacemaking.

"It (the autonomy agreement) is a fact on the ground," Mr. Amayreh said.

The Hamas statement Monday contained none of the customary threats against Israel, but stressed it was not a manifestation of weakness. "Our call for a serious and comprehensive dialogue is made at the time when our militants' swords are still covered with Zionists' blood," it said.

Hamas spokesman in Damascus have claimed the most recent bus bombing, which killed five people in Jerusalem on Aug. 21. But there was no local claim of credit, as in earlier attacks.

Sheikh Yassin last month wrote Mr. Arafat affirming the group's "commitment to reaching an agreement with the Palestinian Authority," Mr. Abdul Razak said.

Mr. Abdul Razak said he and two Hamas activists, Ismail Haniyeh and Khaled Al Hindi, visited Sheikh Yassin in prison recently. Mr. Abdul Razak said Sheikh Yassin called on his followers to end the violence.

Mr. Hindi, a member of the Hamas committee negotiating with Mr. Arafat, refused to comment. "We will issue a statement the moment we have something to say," he told the Associated Press.

Hamas sources have said the movement is considering forming a political party to participate in Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza expected by the end of the year.

On Sunday, a Hamas spokesman in Jordan said the group would form a political party, but stressed its goal would be opposing Israeli-Palestinian peace.

Ibrahim Ghosheh, the spokesman, said Hamas' party will not participate in the elections and will oppose all accords between Israel and the PLO.

COLUMN

Antonioni makes return in Venice

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Silenced by a stroke, famed director Michelangelo Antonioni still had much to add Sunday to the Venice Film Festival with his comeback film *Beyond The Clouds*. Extra showings of the film were added because of huge demand for seats. Some people began lining up for tickets hours in advance. It received a standing ovation at each showing. Wim Wenders co-directed with the 83-year-old Antonioni, who lost his voice in a stroke 10 years ago and was awarded an Oscar this year for his lifetime career. The film includes two interludes with music by Irish rock group U2. Taken from short stories written by Antonioni in 1983, the film features an international cast including John Malkovich, Fanny Ardant, Vincent Perez, Paul Weller and Sophie Marceau. How can a man who is unable to speak direct a film? To dispel doubts that Antonioni's only contribution to *Beyond The Clouds* was his name, the Italian director's wife shot an on-set documentary showing the film in the making. Antonioni used gestures or notes to pass along his instructions. Like many of his earlier films, *Beyond The Clouds* deals with the difficulties of love. Antonioni's last film was *Two Telegrams*, which debuted in 1981. He also has directed *Blow Up*, *L'Aventura* and *La Notte*.

Vietnam outlaws casinos, almost

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — The Vietnamese government has outlawed all casinos, backing off from its earlier receptivity to foreign investment in a business once identified only with decadent capitalism. The ban was approved by Le Xuan Trinh, chairman of the prime minister's office, the state-run Vietnam News reported Monday. The report gave no reason for Mr. Trinh's decision, which hints at some of the conflicting interests in this Communist nation as it seeks to integrate into the non-Communist World and modernise its economy. Vietnam has experienced a general tightening of internal security in the past few months. Vietnamese conservatives are suspicious of casinos, even though supporters argue that they are a good way to attract foreign tourists and investors. Vietnam has only one world class gambling house, the Do Son Casino, built at a northern beach resort 140 kilometres east of Hanoi. The newspaper described the facility as "a trial run for casinos in Vietnam" and said it would not necessarily have to close under the new rule. The Do Son Casino is owned partly by Hong Kong's United International Business (UIB) Group. A company owned by Hong Kong tycoon Stanley Ho is one of UIB's partners.

Acclaimed play on U.S. Navy gays to fold

LONDON — *Burning Blue*, a critically acclaimed play about a homosexual witch-hunt in the U.S. Navy, is to close early, producer Robert Fox said. Within a week of its opening in London's West End in July, Fox clinched a Hollywood film deal with stars such as Tom Cruise, Johnny Depp and Brad Pitt being considered for the main roles. But Fox, faced with losses of £363,000 (\$563,200), has been forced to close the play early, blaming a summer heatwave, the play's subject matter and scenes of male frontal nudity.

Seminar to review peace and economy

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, in cooperation with the Jordan's Institute of Diplomacy, will hold a three-day special international policy conference under the title of "Building on Peace: Toward Regional Security and Economic Development in the Middle East."

The conference, which will begin on Saturday, will host speakers from Jordan, Israel and the U.S. The issues discussed will generally be related to the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed in October last year as well as the role of the U.S. in ensuring the success of the Jordan-Israel peace effort and in building upon that achievement for wider peace process objectives.

"The purpose of this conference is to evaluate the Jordan-Israel peace experience one year on and to assess the potential of building on the model of that agreement to promote regional security and economic development," said Robert Satloff, executive director of the Washington Institute.

Speakers at the conference are expected to include His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Israeli Minister of Health, Ephraim Sneh, Jordanian Ambassador to Israel Marwan Muasher, Israeli Ambassador to Jordan Shimon Shamir, the scientific advisor to His Majesty King Hussein as well as senior American, Jordanian, Israeli and other Arab officials, diplomats, scholars and private entrepreneurs.

During the conference, participants will divide into small-group sessions to discuss issues as the outstanding Jordan-Israel bilateral agenda, ways to expand economic opportunities of peace as well as the role Washington can play in the next stage of the peace process.

Israeli 'party' for Jerusalem gets off

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel on Monday kicked off the 3,000th anniversary celebrations of what is seen as King David's conquest of Jerusalem, under-terred by criticism that it was an attempt to deny Palestinian claims to the city.

The 17-month festivities are being boycotted by the European Union and Palestinian leaders because of the controversy. Some orthodox Jewish leaders are also staying away, saying the celebrations are too secular and that the date being celebrated for the founding of the "Jewish capital" is wrong.

For Monday's opening ceremony, Israeli leaders came to the Arab neighbourhood of Silwan where archaeologists have been uncovering the "city of David," the ruins of the ancient settlement where Israelis believe King David proclaimed the capital of the Jewish kingdom.

Dozens of riot police lined the rooftops to prevent possible unrest as Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and 200 guests

kicked off the celebrations on the slopes below the walled Old City.

Mr. Rabin emphasised the central role of Jerusalem in Jewish history. "My Jerusalem is the heart of the Jewish people, the focus of its yearnings, the land of its visions, the cradle of its prayers," Mr. Rabin said.

As the half-hour ceremony ended, Silwan residents staged a silent protest, releasing dozens of balloons in the Palestinian national colours of green, red, black and white. A large Palestinian flag was hoisted, attached to three balloons.

Silwan resident Moeen Shami, a 28-year-old plumber, said some streets of his neighbourhood had been quickly paved and piles of garbage picked up ahead of the ceremony, a sharp contrast to what he said were years of neglect by the municipality.

"They can change the physical appearance, but they cannot change our hearts," Mr. Shami said. "They say it is a Jewish town, it is not."

2 nuns, 2 journalists shot dead in Algeria

ALGIERS (AP) — A journalist working for Algerian state radio was shot to death Monday, the third reporter killed in two days in a resurgence of violence that includes car bombings and attacks on symbolic targets, the radio said.

Yasmina Brihi, who worked for Radio-Culture, was killed in front of her home in Eucalyptus, one of several Algiers suburbs considered a stronghold of Muslim fundamentalists. The group of towns where Islamic extremists are known to operate make up what is often referred to as the "triangle of fear."

A political cartoonist for a pro-government newspaper was found shot dead earlier Monday, a day after the bodies of two foreign nuns and an Algerian journalist were found.

There was no claim of responsibility for the attacks, but foreigners and journalists have been targeted by radicals in a 3½-year-old insurgency to undermine Algeria's military-installed govern-

ment. The extremists, seeking to establish an Islamic state, are opposed to presidential elections set for Nov. 16, along with Algeria's main opposition parties.

Cartoonist Ibrahim Garoui, 40, who sketched for the daily *Al Moudjahid*, was found dead Monday after armed men took him from his home Saturday in Eucalyptus, a spokesman for the newspaper said on anonymity.

Garoui became the 50th journalist to be killed in the insurgency, which began when the government cancelled elections the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was expected to win. More than 30,000 people have died.

Said Tarzout, a 32-year-old reporter for the French-language newspaper *Le Matin*, was gunned down Sunday near his home in Tizi-ouzou, the capital of the Kabyle region, officials sources said.

Tarzout was the third member of the *Le Matin* staff killed.

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